THE BYSTANDER, DEC. 2ND, 1932

VOL. CXVI. No 1511

The BYSTANDER

2/-

Christmas Number 1932

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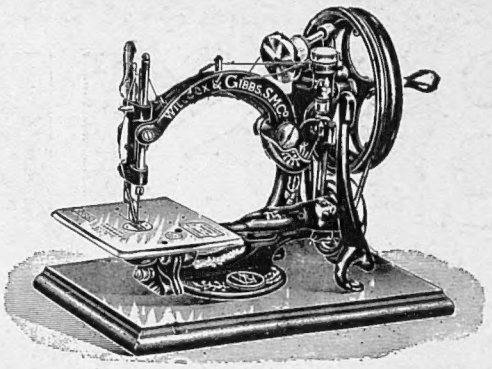

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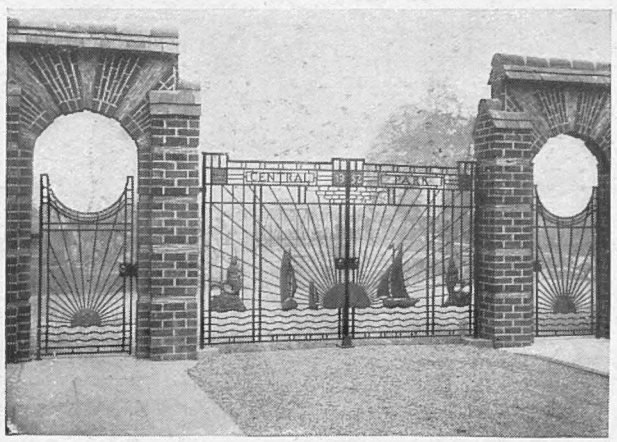

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TO THE PUBLISHER OF *The Bystander*, 346, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.2.

Vol. CXVI. NO. 1511A

The BYSTANDER

Christmas Number

BY TOM GENTLEMAN

"NOW WE'RE OFF . . ."

BY PEARCE

EROS GETS THAT CHRISTMAS FEELING

"THE BYSTANDER'S" CHRISTMAS CARD

Perpetrated, as a change from snow, holly and bonhomie, by

WILLIAM BONEYARD and TONY WYSARD

The JOLLY CHURCHYARD

A Seasonable Frolic

ROUND about the Churchyard, in and out the tombstones,
(Listen to the wind, boys, listen to the wind!)
How the jolly skeletons are rattling their bones, boys.
(Listen, merry fellows, to the wailing of the wind!)

Chorus: Oh! Rattle up the bones, as we romp *around the churchyard;*
Rattle up the bones as we stamp *upon the mould;*
Rattle up the bones as we dance *upon the monuments;*
Och! The merry worms and the tomb so cold.

Oh! Sling about the wreaths as we flit among the yew trees,
(Listen to the hooting of the big brown owl!)
The cakes are in the crypt and the bar is in the belfry.
(Listen, merry fellows, to the hooting of the owl!)

Chorus: Oh! Rattle up the bones, etc.

Here come the sexton and the monumental mason,
(Sort out your shrouds, boys, and cover up your bones!)
Soon the jolly churchyard will have another member.
(Listen to the rattle of the spade among the stones!)

Chorus: Oh! Rattle up the bones, etc.

THE HUNDREDTH SHEEP

A Comedy of Matrimonial Errors in Mayfair, where Love's old sweet Duet is sometimes a Trio for Eternal Triangles

By

F. E. BAILY

On the day on which Lady Mendip eloped with Sir Hugo Peregrine, Meriel Pryde lunched with Peter Western at William's Club

I.

On the day on which Lady Mendip eloped with Sir Hugo Peregrine, Meriel Pryde lunched with Peter Western at William's Club, an ancient and jealous institution, one of the last to suffer the disgrace of women guests ; but adversity makes strange bread-fellows.

She sat opposite Peter, adorable in her impalpable summer frock light as a breath, making every now and then the little mutinous gestures of the professional beauty. Even the waiters at William's Club, a depressed race much bullied by retired generals, knew her for one of the prettiest girls in society. At twenty-two she stood on top of her world, and Peter, six years older, a rich young man with every advantage of birth and education, moved steadily towards the top of his, that happened to be the world of finance. He possessed everything except a title, which is rather stuffy nowadays, and she knew quite well he had taken her to William's Club in order to propose.

He gave her melon and caviare, and sole cooked in a miraculous manner, which is the secret of William's Club, and she refused all the sweets and insisted on a cheese soufflé in order to give trouble, because cheese soufflé takes a quarter of an hour to cook and has to be ordered specially. When it came at last, she ate a few mouthfuls and wasted the rest.

Peter, who was tall and good-looking, with one of the keenest intelligences of his generation as regarded everything and everyone except Meriel, watched her with the eyes of an affectionate dog and considered her to be sweet-natured, beautiful, wonderful, divine, and marvellous. Actually she was not so bad, beneath all her affectations. When they arrived at the stage of coffee and cigarettes (for William's, gritting its teeth, permits smoking in the ladies' dining-room, though any member who dared to smoke in the coffee-room, as the members' dining-room is still called, would be requested to resign, under Rule 67), he gathered himself together and said : " Meriel, darling, will you marry me, please ? I love you like hell, and we 'd have a simply wonderful life together."

Meriel shrugged the pure line of her shoulders very faintly.

Illustrated by "Real Life"

with due acknowledgments to

MERIEL PRYDE . . . . .

PETER WESTERN . . . . .

LORD MENDIP . . . . . .

LADY MENDIP . . . . . .

GUESTS . . . . . .

Photography by L.N.A. "Scenery" by Punch's

No man can understand the sheer blank egotism of a prettiest girl in society who knows that every man wants her, that every door, more or less, is open to her, that she provides the star turn at most entertainments, and that tradespeople, theatrical managers, gossip writers and, even, it may be, some of those in High Places eat out of her hand.

Meriel knew herself to be three parts in love with Peter, and probably she wouldn't do better in a way of a husband.

Flash-light Photography

the undermentioned "Cast"—

. . . Miss Rose Bingham

. . . Mr. Billy Milton

. Colonel Morgan, C.M.G., D.S.O.

. . . Mrs. Madge Garland

Mrs. Rex Colclough, Mrs. Cecil Pym

Club, the Malmaison, and Arundell Clarke

If it took place, theirs would be the fashionable wedding of the season. Unfortunately, temperament insisted she should take up momentarily the same attitude towards him as towards the sweets on the menu, apart from the fact that marriage, at the height of her vogue, sounded depressingly final.

" My dyeh," she said at last, " it 's terribly nice of you, but how can one possibly know if one really wants to marry ? I mean, it 's so irrevocable, isn't it ? If I could live with you for a bit and make up my mind it would be fairly simple. You 're perfectly adorable, Peter, but that doesn't prevent marriage with you being a leap in the dark."

Peter replied with the austerity of a young man in love :

"Don't be absurd, Meriel. You can't possibly live with me."

Meriel knew it would be most inadvisable for both their sakes, but she answered, purely to annoy him :

" My dyeh, should I be the first girl ? Of course not. And don't you read Aldous Huxley ? Or don't you ? "

" Meriel, will you, for God's sake, be serious ? Can't you understand it 's a matter of life and death where I 'm concerned ? "

" Marriage is terribly frightening to me, Peter. Now a love affair is quite different and one could always marry afterwards, if it suited both of us."

She gazed at him, smiling the enigmatic smile which Sofrani, the well-known R.A., had caught so well in her Academy portrait—the modern Monna Lisa, as it is called. She was baiting Peter most skilfully. He went very white and haughty.

" Since you 're trying to make a fool of me I may as well pay the bill and take you on wherever you 're going."

" But I 'm only being so sensible, Peter darling, aren't I ? " She looked with fascination on the tempest she had aroused. " Why this rage and horror ? "

Peter merely beckoned the waiter. " I shall be at home all this evening if you want to ring me up and apologise," he said icily, and paid at the desk, as is done in William's Club.

II.

On the night of the day when Lady Mendip eloped with Sir Hugo Peregrine, Meriel dined with a party at the Consulate Club, in Bond Street, so different in every respect from William's. The party was a gay one, and a young Guardsman fawned on her in so far as Guardsmen are capable of fawning, and she danced a great deal with him; and no one knew Lady Mendip had eloped, but presently Meriel caught sight of Lord Mendip dining alone.

He had a bottle of champagne in front of him, which is a good allowance for a man by himself. When they took the empty bottle away the wine waiter replaced it with a bottle of brandy. Lord Mendip continued steadily with the brandy. He sat very still, staring at nothing, with an expression on his face resembling the Day of Judgment. He only moved when he stretched out a hand to refill his liqueur glass. Meriel, who liked him and had done enough harm in one day in the matter of Peter, turned to her Guardsboy and enquired :

" Rollo, do you know George Mendip ? "

William's Club, an ancient and jealous institution, one of the last to suffer the disgrace of women guests

"My wife cleared out this morning with another fella. No doubt they're in Paris at the moment celebrating the honeymoon"

" Can't say I do."

" Well, that 's him sitting alone in the corner. Go over and say I 'd love him to come to my table."

The young man went, and returned alone in slight disorder.

" What did he say, Rollo ? "

" He said : ' Tell her I 'm sorry I can't, and get to hell out of it.' I don't care for your friend's manners, to put it bluntly."

Meriel got up without a word of excuse, for why should a prettiest girl in Society excuse herself, crossed over to Lord Mendip's table and sat down.

" Good evening, George," she said. " May I have some brandy with you ? "

A waiter brought a glass and poured out brandy. Lord Mendip looked at her stonily.

" Meriel, I wish to God you 'd leave me alone."

" I don't think it 's good for you to be left alone to-night, George, and you can't tell me to get to hell out of it as you did poor Rollo."

" God knows where the Brigade found him," Lord Mendip, who had retired from the Bombardiers with the rank of major, observed bitterly.

" What 's the matter, George ? Why sit here alone drinking yourself to death ? "

" My wife cleared out this morning with another fella. No doubt they 're in Paris at the moment, celebrating the honeymoon."

" No doubt it 's your fault, George. It generally is the husband's fault."

" How true ; but is that any consolation ? "

He poured more brandy into his glass, spilling a little on the tablecloth. Meriel was silent for a moment. Presently she asked :

" What are you going to do when you can't drink any more ? "

" You 're very young to hear these sad truths, Meriel, but I shall probably seek forgetfulness in the arms of some girl, and wake up with a splitting head, wishing I 'd never seen her."

Well, it wasn't her business if he chose to make a fool of himself. Still, she liked George in a friendly way, and one could always beg off at the last moment. She smiled her Monna Lisa smile.

" I 'm considered reasonably good-looking, George, and I 've often been congratulated on the beauty of my arms. You might go further and fare worse."

George Mendip was forty-five, with a square chin, a clipped moustache, and a typical soldier's face. He had had about enough, and if a silly girl chose to play the fool with him she could take the consequences.

" Quite. Shall we go along to my flat ? "

" If you 'll wait one moment while I get my coat I 'll meet you in the entrance."

She went back to her own table and said casually :

" Sorry, but George Mendip's down on his luck and I 've promised to cheer him up and move on somewhere else with him." She crossed the scrap of dance floor, and descended to the cloakroom. She had burned her boats on impulse and George Mendip was obviously possessed by seven devils. He awaited her in the hall with a face of granite. They passed through the doorway, the commissionaire called them a taxi, and in another moment she found herself alone with George.

As the taxi swung right-handed into Piccadilly he turned, put his arm round her and kissed her ruthlessly. She let him have his way. She was no stranger to kisses, but the bitterness of that kiss amazed her. It told her that she meant no more to George than any girl on the pavement ; no more than a convenient plaything to distract him temporarily from life because life had become unbearable.

" I don't know," she thought, " how I shall control him. You can only control a man through his emotions, and George hasn't any as far as I 'm concerned. I 'd have done better to let him go to hell his own way, but it 's too late now."

As they swung right-handed into Park Lane he released her. She picked up her handbag, stared into its mirror, restored her make-up with lipstick and powder, and smoothed her

"I knew the porter or someone could let me in, as it's a service flat, and when I found you weren't here I sat down to wait for you, and now —" She broke off and looked at Meriel in silent apology

disordered hair. The taxi drew up before a vast block of flats, and Meriel stepped lightly to the pavement.

Going up in the lift she realised that George's face had become grey and old; the lines under the eyes and from nose to mouth seemed to have deepened. He knew now that the drug even of a pretty girl availed nothing against the bitterness of life. He was merely committed to an adventure that bored and disgusted him.

"He needn't worry," she told herself. "I 'll save his face somehow. But however little I intended to supplant Constance Mendip, it 's a shade demoralising to find I appeal to George just about as much as a good-looking housemaid."

The lift stopped, the gate clicked, George Mendip opened his hall door and stood aside for Meriel. He opened the door of a sitting-room and they entered it together.

Sitting in a deep arm-chair by the fireside they saw Lady Mendip.

She looked very pretty and very pale. She was probably thirty-five, but the wisdom of centuries seemed to inform her dark eyes. She wore a perfectly cut travelling suit and the hat that went with it. Gloves and handbag lay on the floor beside her, where she must have let them fall when, overcome by weariness, she sank into the arm-chair. She began to speak in a low voice, hurriedly and apologetically.

"George, I realise I'm being most embarrassing, and I 'm frightfully sorry, and if you 'll only lend me five pounds till the banks open to-morrow I 'll clear out at once and go to a hotel. At the moment, I 've no money at all, and I didn't reach London till after the banks were shut."

George Mendip had taken a step towards her. Meriel watched him, fascinated. She felt as though this were a play and she was sitting in the stalls. George Mendip's face expressed a whole sequence of emotions: surprise, pity, relief, distress, but not anger. That, to Meriel, seemed the shattering mystery. Anger did not enter into his feelings towards this wife who had eloped with someone else.

They passed through the doorway, the commissionaire called them a taxi, and in another moment she found herself alone with George

"But I don't understand," he said at last. "This morning you cleared out with Hugo Peregrine. To-night I find you sitting here. Was that letter you left behind a lie? Is it all a bad joke, or what?"

"No, George, it wasn't either a lie or a joke. I did go away most seriously with Hugo. I meant every word I wrote to you. But, George, one never really knows a man until one's alone with him in circumstances which—which give him a certain power over one. Hugo flew us over to le Bourget in his own aeroplane, and by the time we got there something in his manner convinced me I could never bear to live with him. You need great tact and gentleness and imagination with a woman who 's going to live in sin with you. Hugo made me feel as if he 'd bought me and paid for me and I was being kept. I 'd never found that attitude before, and so while he was busy about something at le Bourget I just took a taxi to Paris, leaving Hugo and my luggage and everything but the money in my handbag.

"I 'd enough for luncheon and my train and steamer fare back to London and a little more, so I caught the 4 o'clock boat train from the Gare du Nord and reached Victoria at 10.45. I dined on the train, and at Victoria there was just about my taxi-fare left."

"Yes?" said George Mendip.

"I sat down on a bench and wondered what was the best thing to do. I wouldn't go to a woman friend and confess that my elopement was a wash-out. She 'd have been far too pleased, and it would have made too good a story for her to tell. I couldn't go to a man friend, for who could tell how I might have embarrassed him. Finally, I decided I'd go to you, because I couldn't embarrass you much more, and borrow a suitcase and some money so that a hotel would take me in. I felt you 'd understand the situation. I knew the porter or someone could let me in, as it 's a service flat, and when I found you weren't here I sat down to wait for you. And now——"

She broke off and looked at Meriel in silent apology.

"Now, of course, I realise I 've put my foot in it most frightfully, and I 'm awf'ly sorry. Do you think you could still lend me five pounds and a suitcase, and then I 'll go at once. You see, it would be rather frightening if I had to walk about the streets all night."

Meriel saw in George Mendip's eyes the look which had come into Peter's when, in order to bait him, she suggested living with him; a look of combined fury, impatience, and everlasting protectiveness.

"Why," he asked, "did you decide to go away with Hugo?"

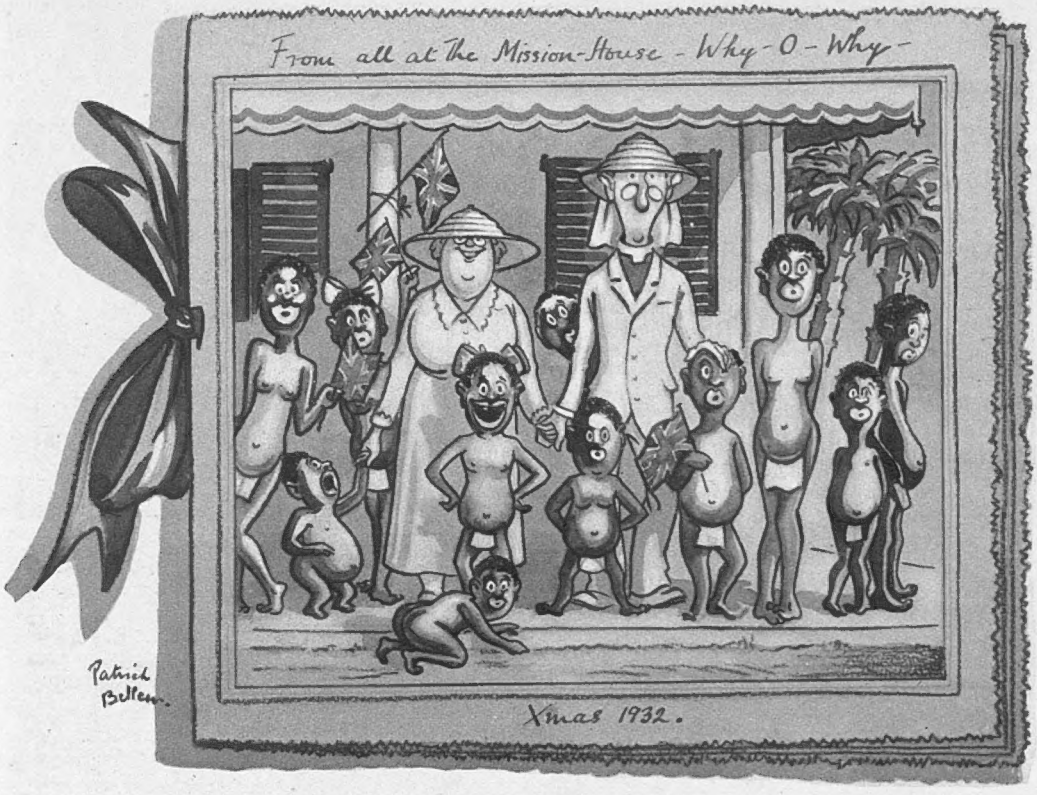
"He said he wanted me, and you didn't seem to want me any longer. But, really, Hugo only wanted a mistress, and I couldn't stand that. He 's convincing enough until you 've burned your boats and then he makes you feel rather like an

(Continued on page i)

"Eddie" Tatham

Hangs up His Stocking Again and Fills It with a Few Touching

Christmas Memories



A snapshot of nude, piebald children carries a pious thought

Illustrations by Patrick Bellew

Mrs. Ramsbottom, Upansmakem Grange, wish you a right joyous Yule, or merely a Merry Christmas. We try and prop them against a clock only they keep sliding down and entirely destroy the social standing of the others. Gone are the days when the Mantelpiece held a collection of frosted Robins, Pigs on a background of snow, and little houses whose windows shone when you held them to the light.

It may be merely that we are growing older, but Christmas and its garnishings do seem to be becoming more pompous and formal. Take the case of Carols. In the old days a few anxious children would clatter up the drive and sniffle out some seasonable tune; you could give them twopence and feel like "Good King Wenceslas." Now choirs of worthy women, with pincenezed male obligatos, bang tuning forks and bellow Anthems through the front door in aid of "Our Poor Fallen Sisters" and kindred services, and you are expected to produce at least £1, plus a glass of "Sparkling Ottawa" and yet still feel like Scrooge!

Already those poignant pointers to the approach of Christmas are beginning to arrive in the shape of "thoughts from Overseas." Neat little cards, with neat little ribbons, bring us "God speed" from the Gurkhas, "Greetings" from H. M. Sloop Pug, whilst a snapshot of nude, piebald children carries a pious thought from "All at the Mission House, Why-o-Why." A glance at a list of mailing dates and we realise the only chance to salve a guilty conscience is a hurried Calendar by Air Mail. Personally, I am a strong disciple of the "Calendar School," especially those with helpful hints and uplifting thoughts. What is more encouraging, if you are sitting in some small room, than to read under an Ember Day that "Many a Mickle Mak's a Muckle"; or when wondering how to remove Beer Stains from Sheets, to find July 1st brightly suggesting throwing them out of the window!

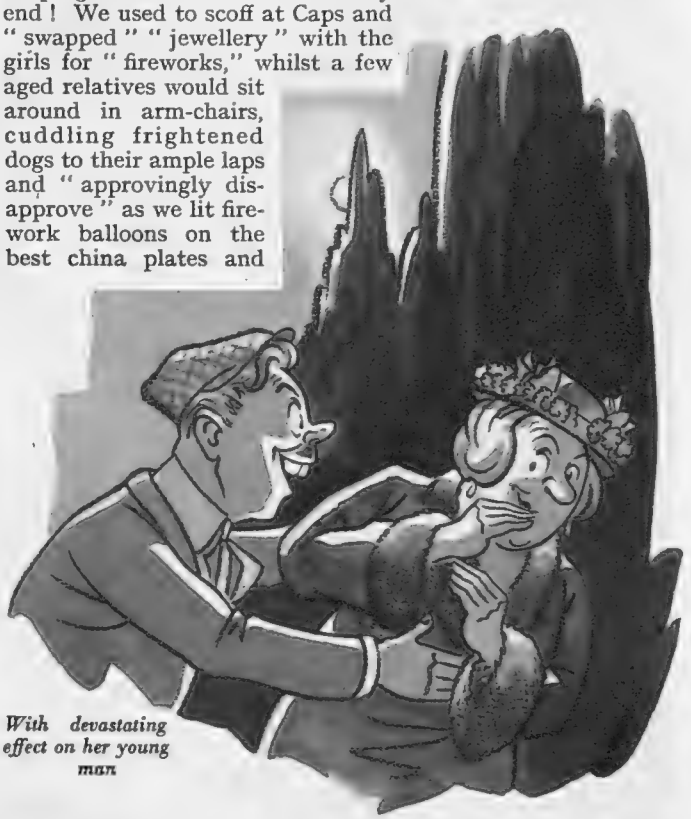
Arranging Christmas cards is always amusing, as it panders to the slight snobbishness in us all. In the front row we will put our "Fighting Forces" selection and the one from the "Hall," which will probably be a flamboyant herbaceous border in full bloom or a sundial with background of doubtful pigeons; if we have collected one from the local M.P. and a few from the last "Birthday Honours" they must, of course, go in front, and those large rich-looking cards with crowns, which we receive from our favoured restaurants and night clubs, come in very useful—they convey a definite hint of Royal acquaintanceship, and should impress callers, if they don't read inside. We can fill up the background with a few Schooners in full sail, some Maidens in Poke Bonnets, and an odd Tom Tit or two. The cards that cause most havoc are those slippery virginal pasteboards which merely announce that Mr. and

I can remember the thrill of being chased by a mauve-nosed and goloshed governess

Then the usual Christmas lunch with its accompaniment of " not to over-eat " warnings

In our youth there seemed to be generally far more snow and Christmas without snow is rather like sausage without mash. I can remember the thrill of being chased by a mauve-nosed and goloshed governess for walking in snowdrifts so that the snow trickled over my snow-shoes. When one was young, servants seemed such an important part of Christmas: for many years my most cherished possessions were a battered little green box, with the magic words " Studs " on it, given me by a housemaid, and a dented metallic Bulldog's head which contained a pen-wiper—this from the cook. In return, I gave the housemaid a wonderful box of indigestible sweets, with a portrait of either Zena and Phyllis Dare or Baden-Powell on it. For the cook I proudly ventured into the village stores and bought a large bottle of cheap scent called " Desert Desire," which, on her " evenings out," she used with devastating effect on her " young man."

And also when we were young we had the joys of the Christmas stocking and Christmas tree; how tight we squeezed our eyes when our parents tip-toed in to fill our stockings, hardly able to wait until they had closed the door before we scrambled down the bed and, by the glow of the night-light, explored its thrilling contents; and how we had to pretend we hadn't peeped at the tree before the afternoon tea-party! The postman always seemed to be late on Christmas day, which added to the excitement. There were generally two or three deliveries, the parcels post coming last of all, and it was very difficult to concentrate in Church and sing " Noël, Noël " with due reverence and not wonder if it would be a book or paint-box from Auntie Ada. Then the usual Christmas lunch, with its accompaniment of " not to over-eat " warnings, followed by a forced rest in preparation for the tea-party. What fun those tea-parties were!—the neighbours brought their freshly washed children, and we had been polished by the governess, there was the usual somewhat self-conscious gathering before the actual meal, then the entrance to the room, the squeaks of delight at the decorated table with its blazing lights and piles of crackers, the stuffing of our insides with food—bread and butter being suggested at tactful intervals by the " grown-ups "! At last came the pulling of the crackers, which led to a certain amount of cheating, the knowing ones amongst us keeping our thumbs on the heavy end! We used to scoff at Caps and " swapped " " jewellery " with the girls for " fireworks," whilst a few aged relatives would sit around in arm-chairs, cuddling frightened dogs to their ample laps and " approvingly disapprove " as we lit firework balloons on the best china plates and made embarrassing little snakes unfurl themselves on the " party " table-cloth. After tea there was " Snap Dragon," the Vicarage children plunging their hands into the blazing raisins and pulling out the sixpenny-bits (having gone into training for some weeks by practising on the kitchen-stove).



With devastating effect on her young man

A few aged relatives would sit around in arm-chairs cuddling frightened dogs to their ample laps

In Germany and America everyone hangs up a Christmas stocking, from the youngest child to the " crabbiest " old man, Christmas trees are in nearly every window, in the stations, church porches, and in the shops. In the country they twinkle gaily outside the houses, and are sometimes even in outlying fields. We are probably too self-conscious to express ourselves in the same way over here, but if we have no children with whom we can let ourselves go, let us inflict ourselves on those who have. We shan't be wanted, but we shall enjoy ourselves and probably recapture the happy memories of our youth.

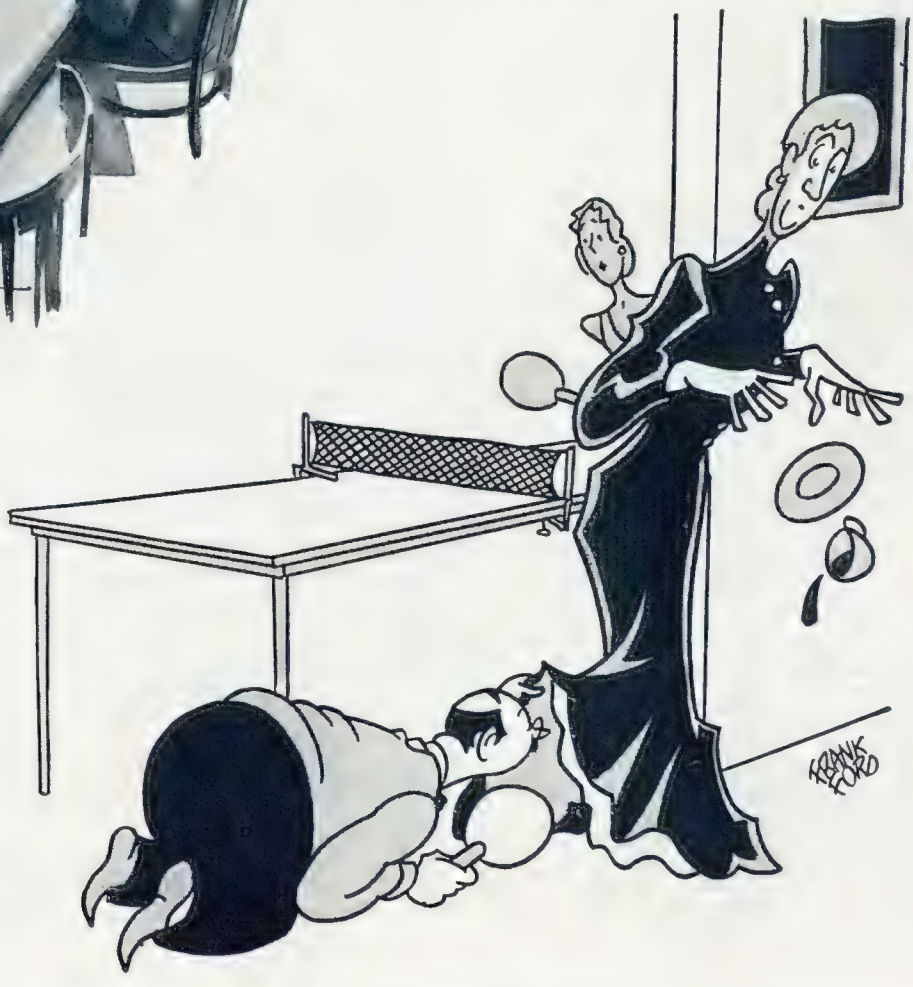
Camera study of Von Gronau, the Dancer, by Vandamm

DANSE MACABRE

YOU DON'T HAVE TO LAUGH . . .

"Oh, Mr. Tupper, you sweep me off my feet!"

"Was yours a sardine on toast?"



"Pardon me, Miss Dutton"

Sketches by
Wain,
Hailstone,
and Frank Ford

Behind the Scenes at Scotland Yard

By Chief-Inspector
D. B. Wyndham Lewis, C.I.D. (Ret.)

(With all due acknowledgments)

Illustrated by Hailstone

"Aren't you being rather a big tease, Inspector? I wear my hat everywhere"

ON receiving an invitation from the Editor of THE BYSTANDER to publish a few "inside" revelations of sensational cases with which I have been connected during my long career at the Yard, I confess I was baffled.

Forty years at the Yard accustom a man to being baffled almost daily, in any position. I was one of the first detectives in Great Britain to close the mouth and breathe through the nose while being baffled—a reform which has since been universally adopted.

On recovering, I at once sat down to peruse my private notes. It was difficult to make a selection, for I have been involved in many causes célèbres and not a few unsolved mysteries. Ultimately, I was able to make a judicious choice, rejecting with equal discretion those cases involving dangerous political secrets and those which might affect sources which to this day augment my modest pension.

"To my amazement, the man burst into my room, pale as ashes"

The Greek Street Mystery of 1912, I think, was one of my most extraordinary cases. For some months I had been perfecting plans to raid a notorious club in that street, the headquarters of an international gang. When all was ready to the last detail, I gave the order to a subordinate to telephone the proprietor of this house in the usual manner and inform him that we were going to raid at 1.30 a.m. To my amazement, the man burst into my room a few minutes later, pale as ashes.

"Nobody there, Chief!" he said breathlessly.

I refused to be hoodwinked. At 1.30 precisely the raid came off as I had planned. My subordinate had spoken truth. There was nobody there. The premises were empty. The birds had flown!

It was not until a week later that I discovered, through secret information, that the club had moved next door. Such instances of cunning are frequent in the London underworld, and the best brains of the Yard are at times hard put to it to outwit these kings of crime.

A MORE sensational case is the one I call the Mystery of the Green Bowler Hat, which—I can reveal it now—very nearly brought about a war in the East. The central figure in this affair was a London doctor named Watson, who had lodgings in Baker Street. In the early autumn of 1899 he had accompanied a friend named Holmes (who was, I believe, a skilful amateur violinist) on a holiday in the Alps, and during that period Holmes mysteriously disappeared. I was put in charge of the case, and on Dr. Watson's return to London I examined him at once at Scotland Yard.

"When did you last see your friend alive, doctor?" I asked.

"A fortnight ago last Thursday, at 6.15 in the evening," answered Dr. Watson readily.

"What were you doing?"

"We were standing together on the edge of a precipice on the Reichenbach, in the Bavarian Alps."

"You did not see him again?"

"No," replied Dr. Watson. "Not," he added thoughtfully, "after I had pushed him off."

I offered him a cigarette and continued:

"What kind of a hat were you wearing?"

"The hat I am wearing now."

I carefully inspected Dr. Watson's hat, which was a greenish bowler. A powerful glass enabled me to discover, hidden in the lining, three grains of ordinary household rice.

'Recently married, doctor, I see." I observed, handing the hat back.

My Most Baffling Case

"No," replied Dr. Watson, laughing heartily. After a little further desultory conversation, he took his leave.

I was not satisfied. It seemed to me that there was something in this case of more than ordinary significance.

A few mornings later I called at Dr. Watson's house in Baker Street towards noon and found him in bed, still wearing his bowler hat.

"Be so kind," I said, "as to explain to me how, if you were not recently married, that rice got into your hat."

"I *carry* rice in my hat," said Watson coldly. "With," he added, removing his hat and waving it, "a hey, and a ho, and a hey-nonino."

I perceived that Dr. Watson was intoxicated.

"Why do you wear your hat in bed?" was my next question.

"I wear it everywhere."

"I advise you to be careful, doctor."

"Aren't you being rather a big tease, Inspector?" asked Watson, lighting a cigarette. "I wear my bowler hat *everywhere*—London, Dartmoor, the Alps—everywhere. I wear it in bed, and I wear it when I have my bath. I was wearing it when I pushed Holmes over the precipice, being sick of the infernal patronage of that big stiff, and I'm wearing it now. There are pictures of me wearing it. And will you oblige me in the meantime," added the doctor, pulling the sheets over his head, "by going right to blazes this very moment?"

"Wait," I said sternly. "*What is your real name, Dr. Watson?*"

"Sarah Bernhardt," answered Watson from under the bed-clothes.

I returned to the Yard in profound meditation. Although cases of women masquerading as men are not unknown to those of us who have our fingers on the pulses of the world of crime, this particular name, so typically foreign, seemed to me to be significant. In my room at the Yard, I devoted some hours to puzzling things out before retracing my steps to Baker Street, where I found Dr. Watson, or Bernhardt, still in bed.

"You again, Ham Face?" he said wearily.

"*What is your real profession?*" I fired the question at him point-blank. I saw his face blanch slightly as he lay there.

"Does it matter?"

"Most certainly."

"Supposing," said Watson, fingering his drooping moustache, "it involved the honour of a dear pure woman?"

"That can't be helped, I'm afraid." He shifted uneasily on his pillow.

"You are a man of honour, Inspector?"

"I trust so."

"Well," said Watson, at length, in a muffled voice, "between ourselves, I'm a Tiller Girl."

I could not conceal my surprise.

"You *dance*?" I said incredulously.

"The Maharajah's keen eyes blazed as he examined the gem"

An interesting photograph of Chief-Inspector Wyndham Lewis in the early days of his long and brilliant career

"Not with *you*," said the doctor, hiding his face behind his fingers with a nervous twitter. "Any more questions?"

"Yes," I said. "*Why is your bowler hat of that greenish tinge?*"

I saw I had got under his guard at last. I had hit the mark. Watson sat up in bed, removed his hat, and examined it anxiously.

"Now you mention it," he said, biting his lip, "I see——"

As he spoke, flourishing his hat, something hexagonal and polished, blazing with a thousand sparks of fire, green, red, white, purple, flew from the lining and rolled across the bed-room floor. I pounced on it with a cry of exultation and held it up.

It was the famous Boop-a-Doop, the Coronation Diamond of the Maharajah of Mukpore, for which the police of three continents had been searching in vain ever since the Maharajah's odd adventure in Montmartre three months before!

"The Boop-a-Doop!" I cried.

"Is it?" said Watson, yawning, and lay down again, pulling the sheets over his head. I could get no further conversation out of him, and after a time I perceived, by his regular breathing, that he had gone to sleep.

I leaped into a cab, was whirled to the Yard, and summoned a conference at once. The telephones were set busy. Within an hour the Maharajah was in my room.

"Your Royal Highness's diamond, I think?" I said quietly.

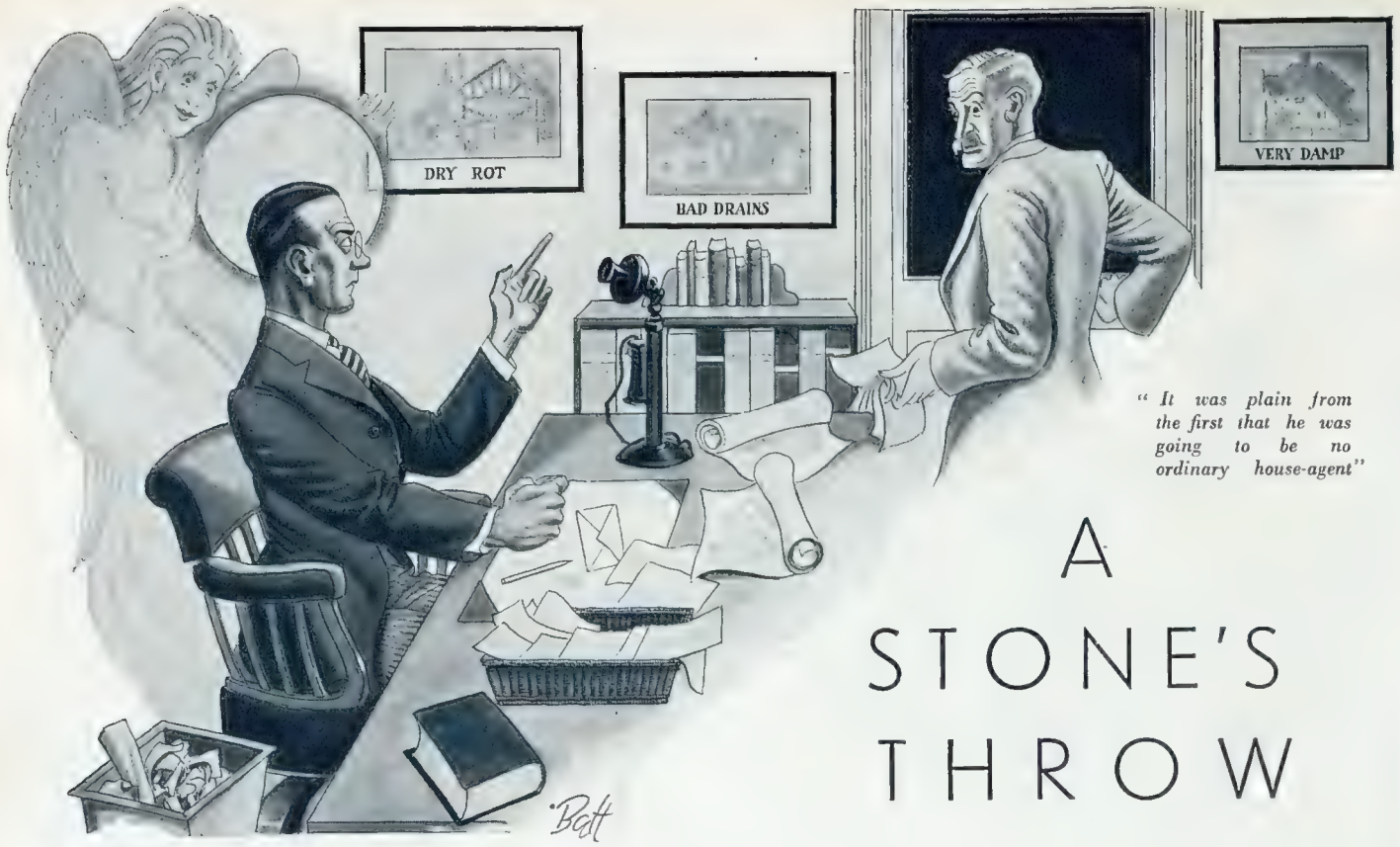
The Maharajah's keen eyes blazed as he examined the gem.

"No," he said.

And there the case ended, a problem which has never been solved. At the Yard they still speak of this as one of the most baffling mysteries ever presented to the world's finest detective force. The diamond, for which a prominent firm of jewellers offered four shillings and sixpence, is now in the Yard Museum. Dr. Watson is in a nursing-home at Beckenham.

Another amazing case——

(That'll be all right.—Ed. BYSTANDER).



" It was plain from the first that he was going to be no ordinary house-agent"

A STONE'S THROW

The Plain and Moving Story of a House-agent who Spake the Truth . . . Poor Mutt!

By JAN STRUTHER

THERE was once a truthful house-agent. (If you who read this are a house-agent yourself, or the wife or the son or the personal friend of a house-agent, there is no need to bristle and look offended. If I began a story by saying, " There was once a handsome Prince," would you take it to imply that all other princes were ugly? Of course not. Very well, then.)

There was once, I repeat, a truthful house-agent. Orphaned at the age of three, he was brought up by a maiden aunt who, while deploring all passions as sinful, had herself unconsciously become the slave of one—namely, a passion for Fact, which she shortsightedly confounded with Truth. To this craving she sacrificed everything else, including Edward's childhood. She deprived him not only of fairy-tales, but of fiction. His reading matter consisted solely of histories, geographies, and scientific manuals. It was, therefore, not unnatural that by the time Edward grew up he should have acquired two things—a wholehearted dislike of reading and a deep-rooted habit of truthfulness. The first deterred him from attempting to explore the realms of imagination and delight which lay between the covers of the books that he had never read; the second prevented him from keeping the few friends whom, under his aunt's disapproving eye, he had managed to make. One by one they dropped off owing to the fact that when they asked Edward for an honest opinion on their problems, they got it.

Thus it came about that, on the death of his aunt, he presented, at thirty, a lonely and somewhat pathetic figure. Deprived of the consolations of both friendship and fantasy, he found that time hung heavily upon his hands. He decided, therefore, to spend the small capital that he had just inherited upon the purchase of a business which should provide him not only with income, but with occupation. It was inevitable that his mind should turn towards the real, the tangible, and the solid; and what more solid, more tangible and more real, than Real Estate? So he bought the small but flourishing firm of Butter, Breadalbane, and Butter, and became, as I have said, a house-agent.

It was plain, from the first, that he was going to be no ordinary house-agent. The first person to discover this was Prummett, the head clerk, who had been with the firm for some years, and rather fancied himself on his persuasive manner with clients.

" What do you mean," Edward asked him sternly one day, " by telling that lady who came in just now that No. 4, Brownly Street, was a sunny house? "

" Well, it is," said Prummett; " when the sun's facing the right way, I mean."

" When the sun 's due north," said Edward tersely, " No. 4, Brownly Street 's the sunniest house in London. At all other times it 's pitch dark, and you know it. I don't intend to sell houses by telling lies."

Into the rest of the staff also, Edward patiently drilled his methods. " This ad. you 've drafted won't *do*," he would explain. " Cut out ' *In perfect order and ready for immediate occupation.*' There 's dry rot all over the basement."

At first, his underlings grumbled, shook their heads, and gave the business about six months to live; but after a while they fell into line, and certainly Edward's system seemed to justify itself, for in six months' time the number of clients had multiplied enormously, and the firm of Butter, Breadalbane and Butter had acquired a singular and enviable reputation. " My dear," women said to one another, " you can really believe every single word they say." (Not, as I told you before, that all other princes are ugly; but—well, some of them are . . .)

Even the selling clients, who at first were inclined to resent Edward's refusal to overpraise their houses, climbed down at once when they saw how quickly his simple and admirable methods led to a sale. Buyers began to think that, since any

He kept hearing a strange sound

house which he advertised never turned out to be less desirable than he stated, the chances were that it was actually more so, that it had hidden virtues that he was too modest to proclaim. Herein lies the commercial value of habitual under-statement.

All might have been well, and Edward to-day a respected and affluent citizen, had it not been for the obstinacy of Lady Eleanor Fyshe. Having suddenly decided to go abroad, she put into Edward's hands her magnificent house in Bayswater, and a slip of paper on which she herself had drafted an advertisement of it.

"Within a stone's throw," the advertisement concluded, "of Hyde Park." Mechanically, Edward's pencil struck out the last seven words. Lady Eleanor indignantly demanded why.

"Well," said Edward apologetically, "you see, it isn't true. Your house is at the farther end of Mablethorpe Terrace, not the Park end. I am sure of that, because I happen to live near there myself. Supposing we say 'Within two minutes' walk' instead?"

"Nonsense," said Lady Eleanor. "I've taken a great deal of trouble over that advertisement, and I refuse to have a single word altered. Kindly put back 'Within a stone's throw.'"

After an inward struggle, Edward made a neat row of dots under the offending phrase and reluctantly wrote "*stet*" in the margin. After all, the Peerage is the Peerage, and hitherto the clients of Butter, Breadalbane and Butter had been of commoner clay.

But that night, contrary to custom, Edward could not sleep. He had a twinge of neuralgia in his conscience, and he kept on hearing a strange sound—a sound which could be none other than that of a deceased aunt turning over and over in her grave.

At about three o'clock in the morning he could stand it no longer. Hastily drawing on a pair of trousers and an overcoat, he crept out into his tiny back-yard, which anyone but Edward would have called a garden, and spent two or three minutes searching the sooty strip of barren earth which anyone but Edward would have called a flower-bed. What he found he concealed in his pocket. Then he slipped in at the back door again and out at the front door and round several corners, until he reached Mablethorpe Terrace, and secreted himself beneath the pillared portico which covered Lady Eleanor Fyshe's doorstep.

He glanced once northwards up the lamp-lit, deserted street, and once southwards to where the plane trees towered above the railings of the Park. Then, resolutely, he put his hand in his pocket.

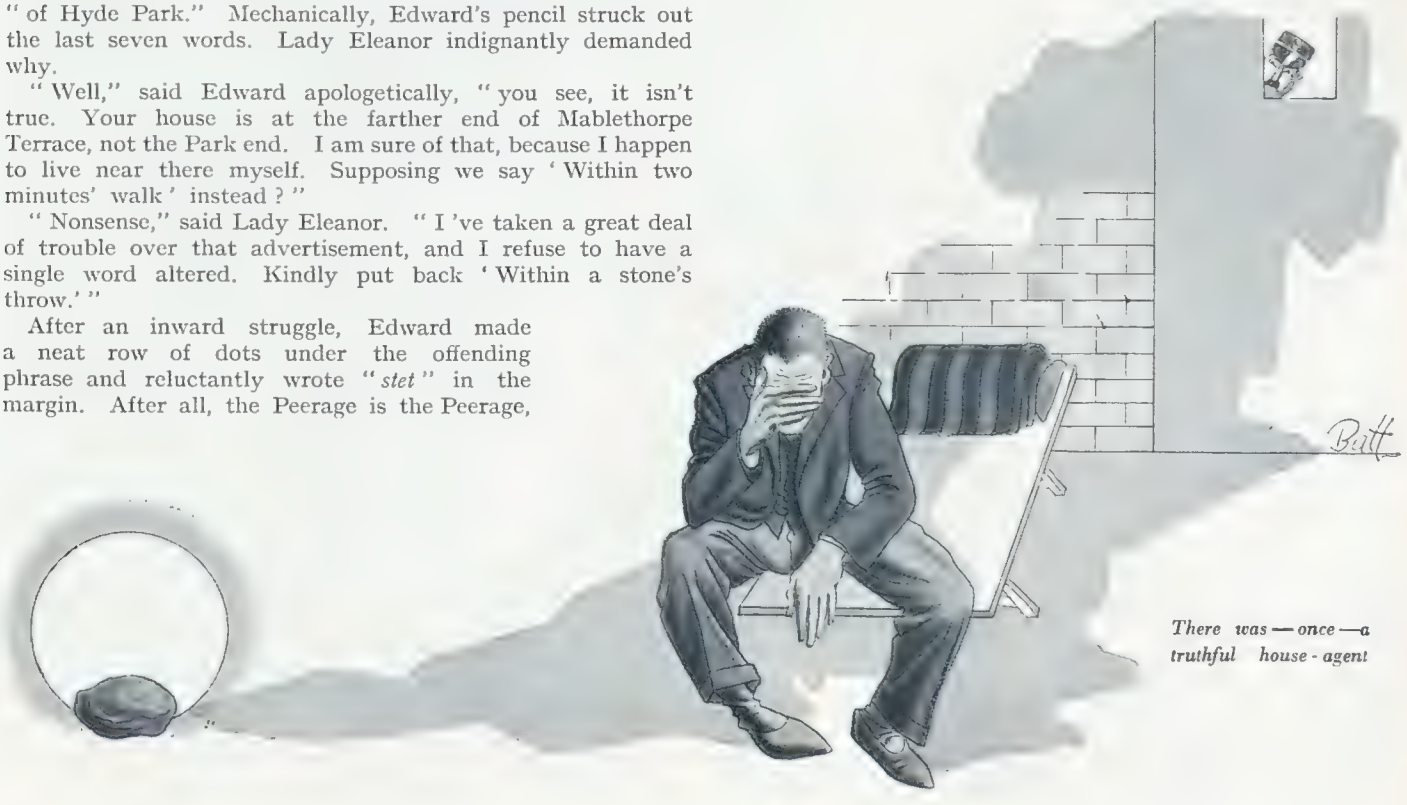
The first stone—a small, light one—fell in the gutter only a short way down the street. The second—large and heavy—did not go very much farther, but it nearly killed a passing cat, who leapt into the air with a squawk of indignation. For his next attempt, Edward selected a beautiful smooth stone of medium size. If this one reached the Park railings, he reflected, he would be able to advertise Lady Eleanor's house without giving offence either to the Peerage or to his own conscience.

He took careful aim and threw the stone. It went like a bird, far farther than the other two, and landed—still forceful—on the cheek of a policeman who was on point duty in the Bayswater Road.

"'Ere!" said the policeman, and blew his whistle.

The rest of the story is too painful to relate in detail. London is a city in which you cannot, with impunity, be found on a titled stranger's doorstep at 3.15 in the morning, inadequately dressed and wantonly throwing stones at the police. As the magistrate said when Edward tried, in broken tones, to explain his motives, "My good Sir, if you were *not* drunk, that makes matters all the worse."

There was—once—a truthful house-agent.



There was—once—a truthful house-agent

FLIBBERTI

And lifting her knuckles to her mouth, she kissed . . . the large pale pearl.

"DARLING, you 've got your ring on still."

"I know I have."

"But you 're not going into the sea in it?"

"Of course."

"That 's silly."

"Ah, but it isn't, Maurice. It loves sea water so, and I 'm so fond of it."

And, lifting her knuckles to her mouth, she kissed, as though it were something animate, the large pale pearl, then dived.

"Idiot!" he cried.

A moment later he was splashing in the sea beside her, under the blue tent of a Mediterranean sky, with the gold of a Mediterranean sun pouring its evening light over the purple shadows of the Esterelles, with the water so warm that she was not even gasping. On all sides of her were warmth and colour. It was impossible to realise that she had woken that morning in low-hilled Essex, to grey skies and rain-splashed windows. The one scene was as different from the other as the sunburnt, laughing swimmer at her side was different from the tall, stiff, grizzled husband opposite whom she had bleakly breakfasted.

No two men could be more unlike.

"Which must be why they both attract me so," she thought.

They could not be less alike. Maurice was slight and lithe and dark and foreign. John was broad-shouldered, tall, erect. Maurice was always laughing. John was solemn, his speech punctilious and precise. He was in the middle forties, older than she was by twenty years. Yet there was in him a surprising vein of boyishness. While Maurice, though gay and young, with a constant smile upon his mouth, had an experienced look. He had done so much and seen so much. Yet you did not know what it was that he had done; what it was that he had seen. He had money to spend, but no apparent occupation. He was always going somewhere or coming back from somewhere. Whereas John was so typically "county" that you knew at a glance all there was to know about him: his upbringing, his opinions, his behaviour.

Her friends had been astonished when she had married John.

"You aren't in love with him." They had asserted.

And she had agreed. No, she was not in love with him: not in *that* way, anyhow.

"And he 's not your type," they had persisted.

"What is my type?" she had retorted.

"Someone like yourself. Someone gay and young and irresponsible."

"A Bright Young Person, in fact."

"Yes, more or less."

She had shaken her head at that. That was where they were wrong. She did not want a bright young person: she was one herself: had been for two hectic years. And she was tired of bright young people; of their noise and chatter; their inconsequentialness; the improvised nature of their lives; their short-leased flats; their short-lived love affairs; their absence of convictions. She had turned with relief to a man

Illustrated by Pimlott

The Story of a wife who took the plunge and found Nemesis in the waters of infidelity

By ALEC WAUGH

GIBBET

who knew his mind; to a man with a settled life: who lived, and would die, in the house that a great-great-grandfather had built.

Though she did not fall in love with John, she fell in love very wholeheartedly with the things he stood for.

To the majority of her friends London was the axle round which their lives revolved. To John it was a glorified Luna Park. He kept a flat there because he did not like living among other people's furniture. But he had little use for it. She could rarely persuade him to accompany her on any of her frequent visits. "I 'd seen all I needed to see of London fifteen years ago. But you 're young," he said. "I don't want you to bury yourself in the country. You need variety. You go up and amuse yourself with your friends."

Her friends were astonished at the freedom that he allowed her.

"Doesn't he wonder what you 're doing? You could be doing anything. Isn't he jealous?" She shook her head. "He trusts me," she had answered.

It was his trust, or, rather, the nature of his trust, that had kept her for five years faithful. She was young and she was adventurous, her London setting was casual-hearted. She had met, during those five years, more than one man who had attracted her. She had few principles. She lived for her own amusement. Opportunities had lain to hand. No one need have known. The very obviousness of the opportunity had, however, disarmed her. It would have been too easy. John was never jealous or suspicious: he never questioned her. He accepted her explanations. If she telegraphed that she wished to stay the night in London to see a play; or go to a dinner, or to a dance, he would always, on her return, ask casually: "Was it fun? I hope so." That, and no more than that.

Her friends told her enviously that they would give a lot for so easily satisfied a husband.

"I wonder you don't make more use of it," they said.

"It wouldn't be any fun," she answered.

It was the excitement of the forbidden, she explained, of convention defied, of authority outwitted, that made an affair amusing. If one had a suspicious, jealous, inquisitive husband it would be amusing to see what one could get away with. But with a person like John it really wasn't worth the trouble.

Her friends agreed. "Yes, it would be rather drear," they supposed. Perhaps, after all, being faithful was more fun. And since "being fun" was their one standard of criticism, her faithfulness was definitely considered smart. She called herself "the only faithful wife," and announced her intention of remaining it.

"Maurice," she began, but he was not listening. He was looking across the room towards a girl she could see in a mirror

For five years she had deserved her label. Then, suddenly, at a cocktail party, there had been Maurice, whom for six years she had not seen: who had hovered through those seventy months a vague memory in her mind: and in his dark eyes there had been a friendly, familiar mockery.

"So you 're married now," he said. "You 've a large house, they tell me, and gone county. Do you give hunt breakfasts; know only the right people; sit on political committees, and organise village charities?"

The light had sparkled in his eyes. Though his words were mocking, there was affection in his voice. He really likes me, she told herself. She liked his teasing manner. Though he was only a year or two older than she was, he treated her as a child. He made her feel little and young in a way John never did. She had to take care of John. At times she could almost fancy herself his guardian. But Maurice made her feel a child: young and irresponsible like a child.

"What have you been doing all this time?" she asked him.

"I 've been here and there," he said.

He answered, as he always did answer, vaguely. No one knew much about him. Whether he was English: where

he had been at school; what his antecedents were. Casually there would drift into his conversation references to far places and strange people. He would open a subject with some such remark as "I was talking to a Swede once in a Mexican coffee port": remarks that gave the sense of a wide, uncabined life. Apart from such chance remarks, he talked little about himself.

It was about *her* life that he was inquisitive. He catechised her as a grown-up will catechise a child about its toys. He considered quite definitely as toys the interests, occupations and responsibilities that filled her life; that John regarded as so important and that John had contrived to make her think important. Maurice made everything seem less important; yet, at the same time, more vivid. He made love as he lived, carelessly. John's love for her was a solemn, smouldering passion, flaring suddenly into flame—a passion that demanded, devoured, committed one; that attached responsibilities. Maurice's love-making was flippant. The word "love" would be very rarely mentioned. The three words, "I love you" never said. It would be a wooing of sudden compliments; of "That scarf would look quite wrong with any other eyes"; or "It would be too bad if, with eyes like that, you hadn't got long eyelashes"; or his saying, "Dancing with you is really more of a strain than I care to subject myself to." It was that kind of love-making. It demanded nothing; it offered nothing. It was a bright young person's wooing. It went to the rhythm: "Don't you think it would be rather fun. . . .?"

It was in that spirit that he had suggested the escapade that had landed her at Antibes. "In a month's time," he had said, "I shall be sailing from Genoa for Buenos Aires. I'll be on the Mediterranean coast a fortnight. It would be amusing if you were to join me there."

In his laughing way he had assumed that she would come.

"How many days will you be able to manage?" he had said.

And, later, "There will be such a lot of amusing things to do there. I hope you'll be able to come for at least a week."

Then, with the sudden tenderness in his voice, "I'm longing to see you there. You'll be very lovely with all that loveliness as a background."

He talked of it so lightly that she came to believe that it was nothing very drastic that she would be doing; simply something that would be tremendous fun; to which no high issues would be attached. Yet his very carelessness made it seem more important, since it stressed its fleetingness. It was youth. It was something that must be grasped or lost. "If this goes," she thought, "it will never come again: and why shouldn't I?" she added. "No one need ever know." Had Maurice made her feel that there was any serious consequence attached to such an escapade; had he allowed her to think she was imperilling her life with John, she would never have considered the question of it. But that he never did.

When she told him that John was going to be away for a five days' cricket tour, he merely said, "Now, that's just grand. Come by aeroplane. It'll mean an extra night."

Nor was it with any more solemnity that, on the terrace of the Château de Madrid, with the blue panorama of the coast spread out before them, he pointed to a liner that looked like a child's toy from that high distance.

"In three days' time," he said, "there'll be people sitting here looking out over the bay just as we are now; there'll be a ship like that moving over it, and I'll be on it. It would be fun, you know, if you were to be there too."

She looked steadily at him. He was so fresh; so handsome; so exquisitely young. He was always laughing. Life would be fun with him. He was such a bright companion; so gay a lover; he made everything that one did fun. It would be lovely to be young again; to be irresponsible; to take trips; to consider that three months in any single place was just three weeks too long. Never to own anything; never to be serious about anything.

"Do you really mean that?" she said.

"Idiot! What do you think?"

"I might take you at your word, you know."

"The cabin next to mine is vacant."

"And what would John make of that?"

Maurice shrugged his shoulders.

"You know that better than I do."

But she wasn't sure. John would forgive her a good many things. If she were to say to him, "I have done this and that. I am a silly little fool and I am sorry," very likely he would be magnanimous; he might overlook anything if she laid her cards on the table. A lie was the one thing he could not pardon. "If a man tells me a lie," he had said, "I'm done with him for ever." If John were to catch her out in some act of deceit, he would feel that she had betrayed his trust. He would be through with her. But if she were to run away to Buenos Aires with Maurice, she might still be able to go back to John, provided. . . .

"I know what you're thinking," Maurice interrupted.

"What?"

"That it's a pity you can't arrange your life so that there's room in it for both of us."

She flushed.

"Wasn't I right, now?"

"More or less," she admitted.

"The same flibbertigibbet," he said: then laughed. "You want things, as all your crowd want to

(*Continued on page ii.*)

Her hand rested on his cheek. He kissed it softly, tenderly, holding it close against his mouth

IF IT HAPPENS AGAIN....

Nicolas Bentley drew the picture

No. 1. THE RETURN OF THE TROUBADOUR

IF IT HAPPENS AGAIN :

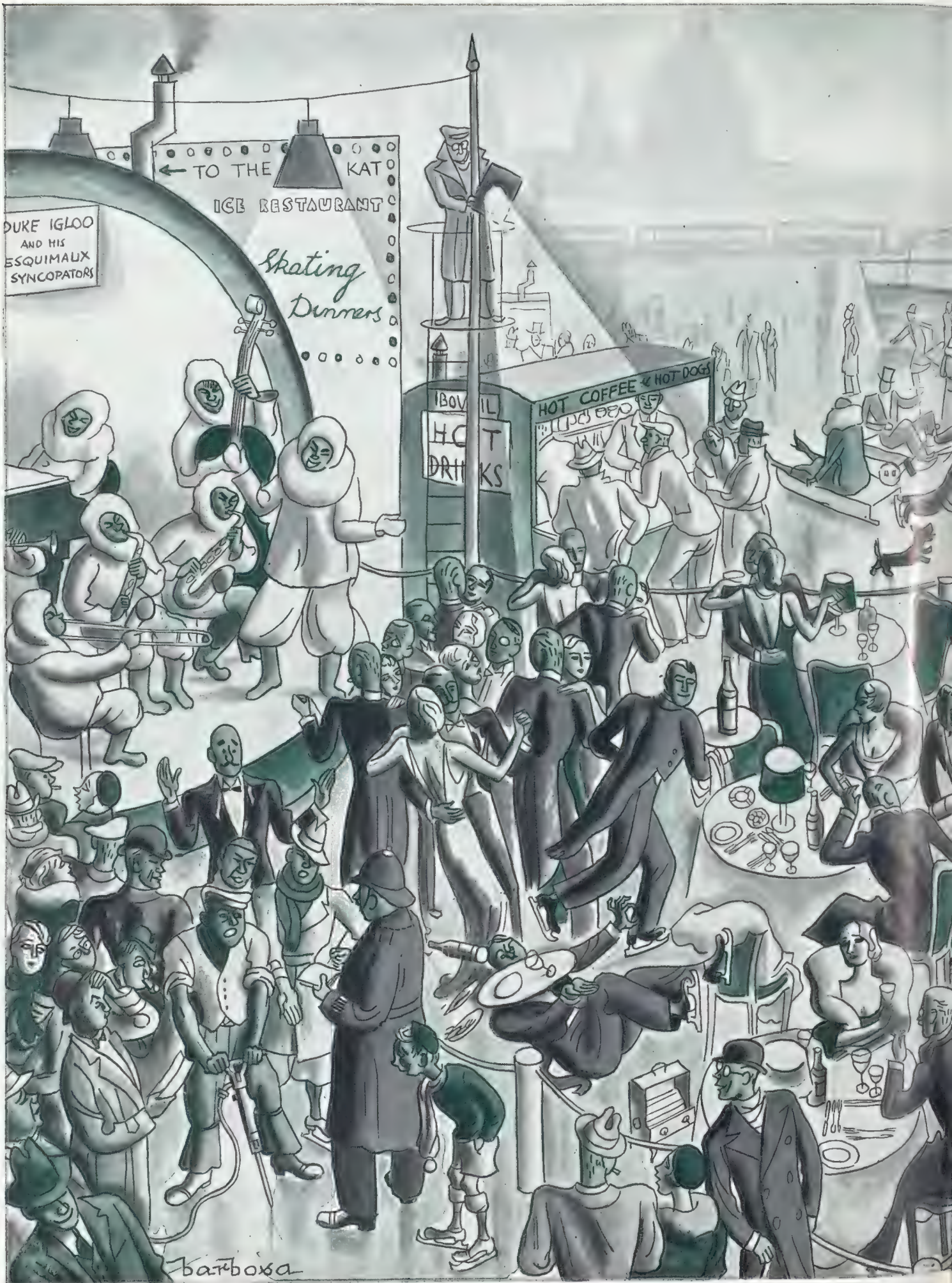
No. 2. LADY GODIVA VENTURES ON A

Unlikely Historical Repetitions

SECOND RIDE THROUGH COVENTRY

BY PATRICK BELLEW

IF IT HAPPENS AGAIN :



No. 3. THE THAMES STAGES

Unlikely Historical Repetitions

BY BARBOSA

ANOTHER GREAT FROST

Good-bye to Mother's Bed

A Modern Ode to a Four-poster

By Glenda Graham

Decorations by Molly Bishop

". . . once upon a time, a bride
Reviewed with reverential pride . . ."

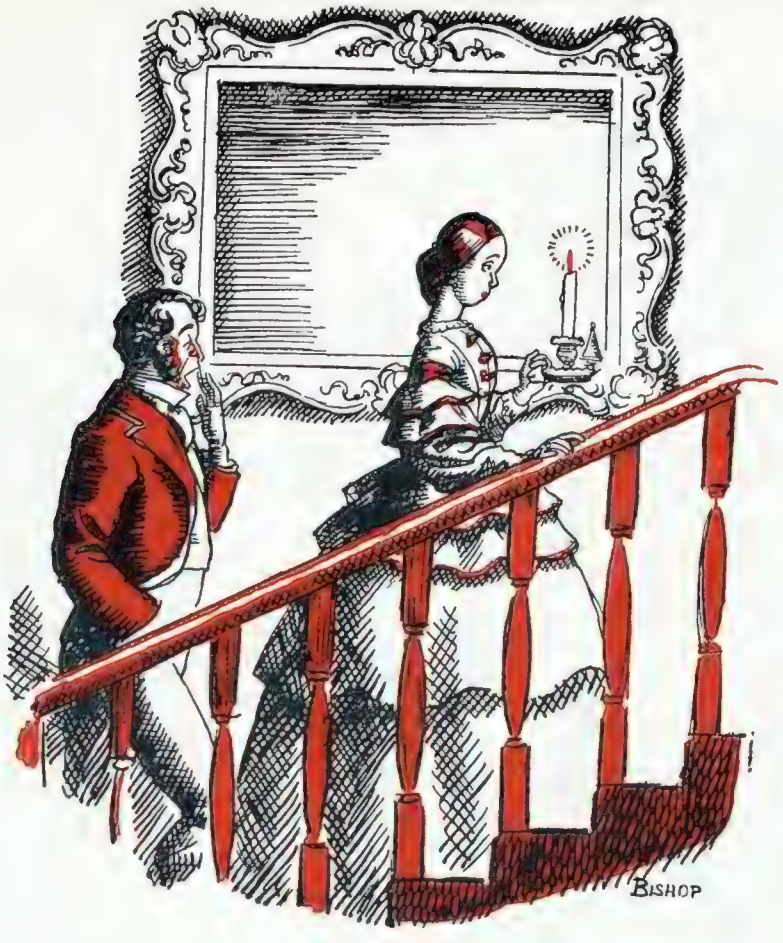
That Shakespeare, when he went
to God,
Should leave her as a sole behest
A bed—and that his second best—
He did it with the sole intent
Of paying both a compliment.

THE old four-posted edifice,
Epitome of wedded bliss,
That once upon a time, a bride
Reviewed with reverential pride,
Like kings and cabs, is turning fast
Into a relic of the past.

Yet heaven only knows what lots
Of princes, peers, and polyglots
Originally made their bow
From beds that are considered now
Unfit for human habitation,
If not a menace to the Nation.

The experts struggle to assess
Upon how many Good Queen Bess
Contrived, from time to time, to keep
Her reputation and to sleep;
They find it harder still to say
How many of us here to-day,
No matter of what race or rank,
Have got the bed of Ware to thank;
And though Ann must have thought it odd

". . . beds that are considered now
Unfit for human habitation . . ."



Those beds—behind whose satin folds
Stuarts and Georgians hid from colds,
Or tried with furtive paramours
To be Nell Gywnns and Pompadours;
Where the Victorian bride, "au lit"
Beneath a gorgeous canopy
Of crackling chintz and glitt'ring gilt,
Embellished by a patchwork quilt,
Anticipated with delight
Fulfilment of her marriage plight
(Only to find she had compiled
Another little Oscar Wilde);
Where our forebears, railed round with
brass,
Decided marriage was a farce—
Those beds—whatever you may say,
Without a doubt, have had their day.

". . . decided marriage was a farce . . ."

However much historians rue
The post-war generation's view
Of where the Very Newly-Wed
Will lie, when he has made his bed,
All ultra-modern brides foredoom
Their husbands to a separate room,
Or else persuade the wretched man
To sleep upon a mean divan.

And so it seems the double bed,
That, since the days of Ethelred,
Has been the hub of wedded bliss,
Must sing its own Nunc Dimittis.

*". . . All ultra-modern brides foredoom
Their husbands to a separate room . . ."*

BISHOP

BY G. S. SHERWOOD

SUBURBIA THROWS ITS FIRST WILD PARTY

Or, What the Bright Young People have to answer for

"To See Ourselves. . ."

—"The Bystander" through the Looking-Glass

Just in case any reader of this Christmas Number is not a regular patron of "The Bystander" in its weekly form, the following sample pages, will, it is hoped, have the desired effect on our rising circulation. Our Social Gossip is the talk of London. And all for a shilling, too!

LADY CATHERINE COCKERELL

The latest Society beauty to extol the virtues of "Debs' Vanishing Cream," by whose artful aid her familiar features are made all the more memorable

Left: The charming old-world cottage, "Bide-a-Wee," is the hunting-box taken in the Whaddon Chase country by the lovely Miss Vita Ross. Guests are observed leaving

Guests at the Cocktail Bar

"Cottage Pie":

An Amusing Week-end Party

Miss Vita Ross entertains a few congenial spirits at "Bide-a-Wee"

The Hostess

Miss Vita Ross ready for an early-morning gallop. She is wearing the famous Ross pearls and one of the fashionable "Initial" scarves

Cocktail Time in Mayfair

The Sur-Passing Hour

Our Weekly Dose of Uplift for the Gossip-Minded

By "Mr. Spyglass"

LONDON is filling up rapidly since Lady Blurp returned from Rapallo, looking bronzed and fit. Everybody knows her tireless work for charity, and her regular appearances at Blurp Towers are the signal for a wholesale sauve qui peut of the rustic population for miles round. "The dear things will do anything to save me trouble," said Lady Blurp to me at Mrs. Rabbage's party in Grosvenor Square last Wednesday.

"You lie, you hag," said Sir Theodore ("Staggers") Garge, who happened to overhear this.

"*Hag* I may be," retorted Lady Blurp with instant wit, "but no *nark*, you dog."

Sir Theodore, amid roars of laughter from those present, seized a siphon and drenched her with unerring skill. Lady Blurp, of course, was formerly Mrs. Julius Van Konk, formerly Mrs. ("Coco") Grabshaw-Grabshaw, formerly Lady Cedric Byte, formerly Mrs. H. K. Wadgery, formerly Miss Nancy ("Bibs") Dischwasser, of Ulysses, Ga.

Photograph by Spite

Mother and Son

The Countess of Lemmon and Ade, quite the loveliest of our Young Marrieds, and one of the most popular débutantes of her year, is seen here in a characteristically natural pose with her fascinating son and heir, the youthful Lord Grimwater, already known in the nursery as "Gripes"

I LOOKED in at the Ambassadors and found a well-known crowd. Lord Tutsworth was lunching very quietly. Others I recognised were Sir "Mokey" Punt, Miss Bismuth, Captain "Boots" Yaffleigh, Mrs. Malch (who, of course, married the Hon. "Dognose" Malch last year), and Miss Etta Lott, of the Hilarity.

Captain Yaffleigh was showing everybody his famous collection of heels, which he gnaws himself from important people's shoes at parties and first nights. As I nodded to him, he got up and hit me with a Viennese roll, afterwards resuming his chat with Miss Bismuth.

Lord Tutsworth, whom I also greeted, had his mouth too full to reply to me with his usual geniality. A little later, passing my table to greet some friends, he remarked: "What-ho! Still nosing round?" I thought this characteristic.

INCIDENTALLY, I noticed the highly efficient Tony of the Ambassadors looking rather worried. He complained to me that he could not get any of the smart crowd to pay for their food, and that when he called on them personally with their bills they beat him till he was half-dazed. I could not help being amused at this typically Continental attitude towards British Society.

GREAT disappointment at the recent breaking of Miss "Toot" Bothering's engagement is being felt among her hosts of friends in Society. Miss Bothering's wedding to Sir Cyril Gibbers, one of the best-known young men-about-town, was to have been the event of the winter, and when the engagement was broken off many people could scarcely bear it. The Hon. Dulcie Fibwick, for one, is still in a nursing home with a high temperature.

Miss Bothering, whom I ran across at Lady Hermione Raddle's musicale in Bruton Street last Friday, told me she broke her engagement because Sir Cyril smelt of Ronuk. "I could see no prospect of happiness with a man, however smart, who smelt of Ronuk," she said.

Her mother, the Hon. Mrs. Bothering, who happened to be passing, stopped to say eagerly: "*We're sticking to the presents, of course!*"

Sir Cyril Gibbers, whom I saw at Poodle's the same night, and informed of this, merely shrugged, and touched a bell. On a club servant's appearing, he said, with characteristic charm: "Out."

I then left, nodding at one or two smart people on the way.

I RAN across Mr. "Puff" Golightly at the Coronet Club the other night. Mr. Golightly told me he had been staying down at Sir Imri Cohen's big place in Leicestershire. The house-party appears to have been quite a "family" affair, no fewer than six of Sir Imri Cohen's stalwart and popular sons—Mr. Cowne, Mr. Cayne, Mr. Cowhan, Mr. Colquhoun, Mr. Keene, and Mr. Caherne—being among the guests.

Lady "Fidgets" Poltigrue wore her magnificent diamonds, which lent added sparkle to the dinner-parties for which this stately house is celebrated. Sir Imri lent nothing.

A PIQUANT affair in Green Street is setting smart tongues a-buzz, I hear. The other day, Sir "Blister" Paddles, who is well known in Fleet Street as "Mr. Babble," of the *Daily Keyhole*, called at a certain house to obtain details of certain happenings in that ménage which are proving of immense interest to the Sunday Press. To his astonishment, the butler, having ushered him into the morning-room, hit him violently on the head with a beautifully engraved warming-pan of Jacobean brass.

"Blister" at once enquired the reason for this treatment. It seems that the butler himself holds all Press and publishing rights in this particular affair, and greatly resents interference from his journalistic rivals, titled or otherwise.

"I beg your pardon," said "Blister" laughingly, when this was explained to him.

"Oblige me by going to hell," said the butler, hustling him roughly along the hall and throwing him into Green Street.

"Blister," who was considerably shaken and covered with mud, is, of course, very keen on surf-riding.

Between Chapters

September, better known as Lady Firth of Forth, leaves her typewriter for a few moments of well-earned relaxation

AMONG the brilliant gathering at the Ermine Club reopening I saw lots of prominent people admiring the new décor, which is, of course, that of a "mental" nursing home, complete even to the temperature-charts. Among them I nodded to Lord Belfry, Mrs. Harrington Glue, Lady Regula ("Plum") Batts, the Duchess of Fribbleham, Lord "Bippers" Oyler, Miss Agg-Agg, and young Mr. Peter Quince, the surréaliste poet, who was being jostled a great deal by various smart acquaintances.

Mr. Quince, who was holding a metal tray against himself most of the evening, told me that he has been doing this for some time to guard against kicks.

Maidenhead

Captain Osbert de-Summer de-Winter Brown (known Major Pauncefort ("Pansy") Merryweather, back-

He is hard at work on a new volume of poems, which he is writing in large capitals on emery-paper with his forefinger dipped in ordinary raspberry jam. "The rough surface," he said, "gives one all that divine crescendo of sensation, that ineluctable impact of the absolute on the subconscious which creative self-expression needs."

As I passed the Duchess's party, she leaned across and dug her fish-fork thoughtfully into my leg. As I left, I nodded to a great number of smart people, one or two of whom—among them the popular young Earl of

Memoirs

as "Nuts" in the Brigade) does a neat feather, while watering with studied grace, takes a look round

Castleguffin—were seizing the opportunity for a quiet nap.

MRS. HAGSBY-CRONE has left Cap Ferrat for Cannes, for the usual reason. Her petite and attractive débutante daughter, Miss "Bébé" Hagsby-Crone, came out last season, it will be remembered, and has since gone in again, to everybody's surprise.

"I simply cannot account for it," said Mrs. Hagsby-Crone, when my Riviera correspondent met her at Cannes. "We are, of course, very upset about the whole matter, for 'Bébé' was very keen on coming out. Since last April, however, she has done nothing but hide in a large wooden box, making the most extraordinary faces! It is a complete mystery to all of us."

To the amazement of all her friends, Miss "Gaga" Biffings has practically decided not to appear at Wimbledon next year.

I ran across her with her fiancé, Lord Henry Toope, at Lady Meretrix's house in Berkeley Square the other night. She told me that the Wimbledon authorities had been most kind and sympathetic about the increasing size of her hands, but that she had come to the conclusion that they were becoming too confusing for the umpires.

"She gets them in the traffic, too," broke in Lord Henry with a merry smile.

Miss Biffings has had an offer from a well-known firm of sports outfitters to "string" her hands, thus obviating the use of a racket altogether, but she has decided to reject it. "It would not be cricket," she said. "I shall probably take up canoeing instead."

"Gaga" is, of course, one of the Shropshire Biffings, her mother being a Surrey Ramboat.

Extension Night at Boglino's

Some of our best known young men-about-town in high fettle. Left to right: And Friend; ——; the Hon. Harold Hopeless; ——; Sir Frank Freemeal and friend; ——

At the first night of Miss Bolo's sensational new play at the Pornography, I ran across Sir George and Lady Flathers, Lady Grumpett, Mrs. "Oogle" Bibsworth, Lord "Freddie" Bulch, and quite a crowd of well-known people.

Lady Snadgeworthy had brought her younger daughter, Utta, whose mass of lovely crinkled black hair so perfectly suits the dark glossy beauty of her complexion and her lustrous, rolling eyes.

It may not be generally known that Miss Utta Snadgeworthy is the only coloured member of her family, Sir Ilbert Snadgeworthy having for some time held an important Government post in Kenya. I saw a number of his friends rallying him laughingly about this, among them Captain "Pidge" Orfleigh, who, to everybody's amusement, climbed up a pillar in the foyer, gibbering most cleverly and pretending to eat a coconut with amazingly life-like grimaces.

"Pidge" is, of course, the popular young Guardee whose imitations of steam-rollers are well known in Society.

The Button Sisters

At a recent meet of Col. Basset's beagles at Badger's Mount

Off With the Quorn

That sure thruster, Captain "Pimps" Tanglefoot, past master of haute école, pops the old grey mare over a hazard

OUR WEEKLY APOLOGIES

THE BYSTANDER regrets that by a pure inadvertence the Hon. Cyril ("Skids") Hawhough was wrongly described in a recent photograph, supplied by the Mayfair Press Bureau, of Lady Cynthia Gape's midnight fancy-dress party at the Zoological Gardens. The caption, "In Merry Mood—Lady Cynthia Gape Finds the Wart-hog Likes Méringues!" should read: "In Merry Mood—Lady Cynthia Gape and the Hon. 'Skids' Hawhough."

THE BYSTANDER apologises at the same time to Volumnia Lady Whooping for a printer's slip in last week's issue. Volumnia Lady Whooping referred to General Sir Wilbraham Gollops as "that Big Tease"—not, as printed, "that Big Cheese."

"Smoked Salmon"—*with acknowledgments to "Caviare"*

By (for this time only) "Eddie" Tatham

who has so often been falsely accused of writing "Hors d'Oeuvres," that he now shows what he *could* do if he tried

Madame Balzova, the well-known tennis star, rests between sets and demonstrates the correct way to wear a béret

Last Week's Big Wedding

Four of Society's best-known ushers leaving St. Winifred's-in-the-Westminster. Left to right: Mr. "Eddie" Tatham, Lord Castlerosse, Mr. John de Forest, and Sir Robert Throckmorton

HAVE you seen—
1. My Face;
2. Carnera's Feet;
3. Tallulah's Bankhead?

THINGS we want to know—
*1. If the Hon. "Eddie" Ward has spent the 50 guineas.**
2. What Madame de Peña hears when she says "Listen."
3. Who was the Baronet with big feet who thought Fanny Adams was Fanny Ward's sister?

HAVE you noticed how some of the "smart young marrieds" drink soup?

* Insured against libel actions, loss at sea and damage by white ants.

Lady Mary Erskine uses a spoon.
Miss Margaret Whigham "oos" hers for fish.
Lord Castlerosse cuts his with a knife.
Lord Brougham and Vaux throws his in the fire and blames the cat.

HOW loyal people are to their favourite restaurants! Mrs. Cecil Pim generally lunches at Euston, and was looking very smart in a "Bookstall Beige" tea-gown one day last week; she was chatting to Mr. Eric Hatry, who is so often mistaken for Mr. Baldwin. Noel Coward, Lady Bridget Poulett, Mr. Mead, Dean Inge, and Lady Blandford usually lunch together at a window table at King's Cross—they get such a good view down the up line. Liverpool Street attracts the intelligentsia; the Beaton Sisters, Mrs. Wooley-Hart, Mr. "Chips" Channen, Lord Ivor Churchill, and Sidney Howard were an interesting little group there the other day; Sir Henry Birkin was reading them his "Ode to a Back Axle."

THE likeness between some of our ex-débutantes and famous cinema stars is very noticeable. Lord Tennyson is frequently mistaken for Dolores del Rio, and you have to look twice to see if it is Lord Portarlington or Joan Crawford; the Hon. Hamish Erskine is often bothered on 'buses owing to his likeness to Gary Cooper, and one evening, at Punch's Club, when Sir Anthony Weldon entered with Sir Anthony Lindsay-Hogg, a Duchess said, "'Struth! There's Greta Garbo and Marlene Dietrich."

IS it not strange
How?—Ducal our Duchesses are.
"Matey" our Marchionesses are.
"County" our Countesses are.
Loose our Ladys are.
Happy our Honourables are.
How Missing our "Mrsesses" are.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE.

WHICH well-known Peeresses are known to well-known Peers as—
"Clap Hands";
"Over the Falls";
"Taxi Tessie";
"Bussable Bertha"?

IT is interesting to note how some celebrities react to rain. During one heavy shower last September Lady Charles Cavendish put up her umbrella; the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava put on a mackintosh; Sir Robert Throckmorton (who started the new craze for Beach Nightdresses) stayed in bed; Mr. Cecil Beaton closed the window, and Mr. J. H. Thomas went to Balmoral.

CURIOUS QUESTIONS FROM CLUBLAND.

WHAT happened on the 5.5 to Biggleswade, and if the Major from Melton and the Merry Widow wish tunnels were longer?

IF the Pop-eyed little Peeress with eyelashes, and the hammer-toed young golfer are not indiscreet to eat so much spaghetti in public, and what does her half-witted husband think?

WHO cares—
1. Whose toe nails are pink;
2. Whose eyelashes are false;
3. Whose feet are flat;
4. Whose Baby are you?

Camera-shots in Society

Left: The Hon. Inane Cork snapped at the amusing Bottle and Barrel party given by herself and her great friend, Miss Wanda Windswept, who went as a bottle of cider

Right: A new portrait of Miss "Babs" Feather, the well-known Society authoress. Miss Feather is a kinswoman of Mrs. Wannerhasset, who is a cousin of the Hon. Archibald Swoon. Her latest novel, "Down Lover's Lane," is a sequel to "There are Pansies at the Bottom of My Garden"

Three of our most elusive débutantes try in vain to evade the camera-man in the paddock at Sandown: Miss Woodby Infront, Miss Wilby Infront, her sister, Miss Ann How, and friend

Lady Why

Above is a new studio portrait of Lady Why, Lord Why's beautiful wife. On the right is a snapshot taken of her when she was sun-bathing on the Lido. Why?

GIGOLO

A Study of the Lacerta Tribe

By Ethel Mannin

He spends as much time as the smartest woman making up his face, and does it far more dexterously

Decorations by James Short

IN any smart bar in Europe you will find him. He is of the regulation pattern: that is to say, he is tall and slender and suave, and his clothes look as though they have been melted on him. He has excellent teeth, a charming smile, fine, well-manicured hands, exquisite manners.

Rich, lonely, middle-aged women are his speciality. He has no principles save that of never becoming emotionally involved with a client. He is very clever about this.

"Oh, my dear," is his line, "don't let us spoil the illusion. It's been so lovely knowing you—so—*different*! I want it to remain like that!" At which point he reverently kisses her finger-tips and allows his eyes to assume a wistful, far-away, please-don't-misunderstand-me expression. The beautiful adventure that never happened is his strongest gambit. He is hard, mercenary, calculating, completely unscrupulous, but also he is brimming with sentimentality and self-pity, and he adores being flattered and petted, just as much as he enjoys brooding on his tragic, wasted life . . . actually, he would not change his life if he could, but it affords him pleasure to invoke chimeras of might-have-beens that in truth never could have been. He has posed and acted so much and so effectively for so long that it has all almost ceased to be an affectation. That shrug of the shoulders, that boyish flirt of the head, that feminine fluttering of hands have in the course of years, become natural to him. Women like his femininity; it makes him so "sympathetic," they say.

His charm and sympathetic manner are largely dependent on his looks, and, because he is very well aware of this fact, age holds a greater dread for him than for any woman. He spends as much time as the smartest woman making up his face, and does it far more dexterously. He knows what the majority of women do not know—that the most effective make-up is that which is not obvious and leaves people wondering whether it is make-up or not.

His greatest dread is of losing his hair and his teeth. Before that happens, he must marry a rich woman—but that is a last resource. With any luck, he has years of freedom ahead of him even when he has reached forty. On the other hand, he mustn't leave it too late—not until he can no longer disguise his age; he cannot afford to wait until he becomes passé; he must land his catch whilst he still has the only things with which to land it—his looks and his charm . . . and he knows that when his looks begin to go, nine-tenths of his charm will go too. . . .

Mrs. Furtive-Fifty is his best client; she thinks him a dear boy; she is the type he knows best; he has met it in bars all over Europe . . . and at Palm Beach, Los Angeles, Honolulu. When he is feeling a little tired, there are moments when she makes his flesh creep, but long years of training enable him to pull himself together and kiss her hand at the right moment. There are occasions when he feels that if she presses his fingers, touches his ears, or ruffles his hair once more, he will scream . . . but his business instincts never fail him. He is used to being caressed; it is what he is there for—an emotional outlet for frustrated females; and he can always switch off on to a higher plane when his clients begin to show signs of being a little *too* emotional and demonstrative.

WATCH him one night when he is in good form, at Victor's, Hector's, Rex's, Joe's—call it what you will, it is always the same, in Paris, Biarritz, Monte Carlo, Palma—anywhere. He has dined with Mrs. Furtive-Fifty at her hotel, and they have "gone on" to Victor's round about midnight to dance and drink. Mrs. Furtive-Fifty has already had as much drink as she can comfortably stand—neither alcohol nor late hours agrees with her; they make her look old; they glaze her eyes and bring out lines and shadows beneath them . . . but one mustn't give in to one's age, and the dear boy is so young . . . and, desperately, she wants to be young too, and to dance with good-looking young men, and drink champagne cocktails at midnight. It is her defiance of her age; once she gives in, she is done for. So she powders her sagging face once more, smothers her yawns, tries to concentrate and to convince herself that she is not tipsy. She began to feel sentimental at dinner, and by the time she gets to Victor's it is chronic.

For his part, the dear boy knows all the symptoms, and just how far he dare and dare not encourage her alcoholic amorousness. Somewhere at the back of his mind she disgusts him; she is old enough to be his mother, and if he is not careful she will make him look ridiculous . . . but he cannot afford to be squeamish, and at midnight he has another two or three hours to go. He comforts himself with the thought that, after all he doesn't have to work during the day; he is a night-worker, and this is all part of the job. . . . Besides, he knows everything she is likely to say, and all the answers he must make.

"I'm too old for you," she says mournfully. "You're just a baby," and her ugly hands, with the thick fingers blazing with diamonds, reach up to the tips of his ears again. He moves away on the pretence of being able to face her better.

"My dear," he says earnestly, "you mustn't say things like that! What is age, after all? One of the sweetest women I ever loved was old enough to be my grandmother! It was a very beautiful friendship which lasted for years."

This is just the sort of speech she finds comforting—such a delicate, sensitive cossetting of her vanity; she yearns towards him. The dear boy—so sweet and sympathetic and understanding. "Baby," she calls him. Part of him hates it; but, also, part of him is flattered by it. He, also, is not so young any more, but so long as women call him "baby," he knows he is still all right.

"My life was so empty before I met you," she tells him.

"Poor darling!" He allows his hand to rest for a moment on her knee in a light pressure of sympathy. She seizes his hand in ardent gratitude. She doesn't know it, of course, but

(*Continued on page* 66)

"4711"
Genuine
Eau de Cologne

The Original half-size bottle - - - 4/9
Full size bottle - 8/9

In pear shaped bottle with nickel screw cap - 10/6

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In wicker covered bottles 7/6, 14/-, 27/6 and 52/6

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"4711" Presentation Cases containing "4711" Genuine Eau de Cologne and "4711" Toiletries. Prices from 3/3 to 27/-

The original half size bottle attractively boxed - 5/-
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Genuine Gifts

TO offer, not merely Eau-de-Cologne, but "4711" Genuine Eau de Cologne, is to endorse friendship with a gift of highest quality—a quality for which there is no adequate substitute. This world-famous toiletry, because of its undeviating purity will convey in most sincere form those expressions of goodwill which are part of the enjoyment of the Festive Season.

"4711" Genuine Eau de Cologne, bearing the well-known Blue and Gold Label, is attractively packed for Christmas giving.

No. 4711. Genuine Eau de Cologne

BLUE & GOLD LABEL

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BY MARGARET BRADLEY

SCANDAL IN THE TOY-SHOP

"Some Christmas, eh!"

DEWAR'S

First-Night Sensati

MR. C. B. COCHRAN INTRODU

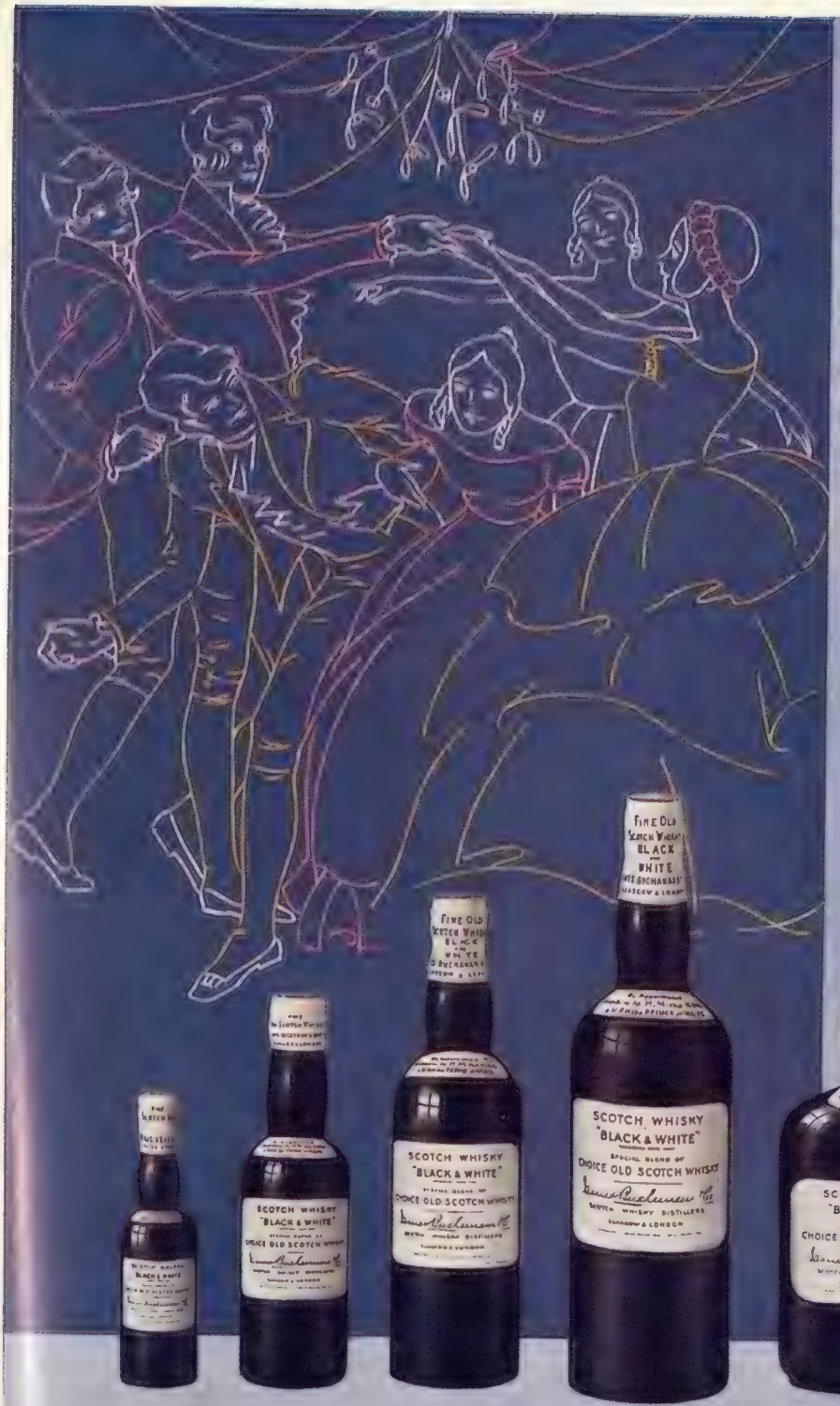
The Aga Khan *Mrs. Alec Rea* *Mr. Willie Clarkson* *Mr. James Agate* *Major Ian Hay*
Mr. J. T. Grein *Mr. Hannen Swaffer* *Mr. Anthony Asquith* *Miss G. B. Stern*
Lady Oxford and Asquith *Mr. Woolf B*

n in Theatre-land

ES HIS "OLD LADIES"

Lord Plunkett *Mr. Brian Wallace* *Lady Dudley* *Lady Lavery* *Mr. "Eddie" Marsh* *Mr. "Eddie" Tatham*
Lady Plunkett *Sir John Lavery* *Mr. Gordon Lennox* *Mr. Gordon Selfridge* *Marquisa de Casa Maury*
ato *Miss Edith Shackleton* *Mr. Sidney Carroll* *Lady Victor Paget* *Mr. John van Druten* *Mr. Edward Knoblock*
Mr. Somerset Maugham *Sir A. Hamilton Grant*

"My dear, you must come and spend a real old-fashioned Christmas with us!"



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Nothing expresses the bond of goodfellowship so well as 'Black & White.' A case of this old Scotch is a gift which will convey your greetings in the right spirit, and incidentally demonstrate your own good judgment of a perfect whisky.

In Special Christmas Cases of various sizes.

"BLACK & WHITE" WHISKY

"The Sign of a Perfect Blend"

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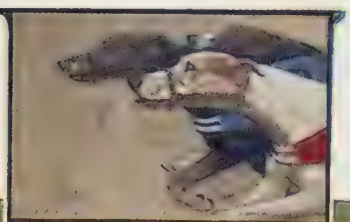
SEE IT AT ITS BEST..

To see the fastest greyhounds on the finest track; to find an "atmosphere" that increases your enjoyment of the sport; to know how much a smooth organisation can add to **your** pleasure—COME TO THE WHITE CITY.

The Club premises at the White City have been enlarged and improved. You can now dine comfortably and watch the racing at the same time. The new Ball Room is one of the best in London.

...GO TO THE WHITE CITY



She became aware that the man opposite was watching her

HONEYMOON

By
Temple Lane
Illustrated by
Roger Furse

HAVING threatened previously, it began on the Ostend boat with active menace. That crossing is a long one, a cold one, and gives scope for the awakening of sensations other than sea-sickness.

She was not sea-sick.

At first she walked on deck, with Hugo, in that silence which the newly-wed are supposed to enjoy. Circumstances being as they were, her enjoyment was negligible. To have walked on deck was a mistake. Finally, in self-defence, she asked him to leave her the solitude of their private cabin.

"For God's sake, will you leave me *alone*?"

Hugo, understandably, went to have a drink.

She did not even feel sea-sick. She watched the English coast and knew they should never have started. They had motored to Dover after the ceremony, and she still had time to turn back then. She had been unfair to Hugo as well as to herself.

Every moment that sent the coast-line farther down the horizon was carrying her farther from help.

Some time passed before she realised that the same minutes were carrying her towards another coast-line and another kind of help.

Their steamer swung from a grey sea towards the grey semi-circle of the Ostend plage—hotels, and again hotels! No hope there! Such a place to be stranded! Besides, their sleepers to Vienna were booked on the international train—"Wien, Bukarest, Istamboul." Darkness was coming down. There was no hope, no escape, nothing to be done.

She had had warning, too. She had tried to tell Janis, her chief bridesmaid, something of what she was feeling, and Janis said it was nerves.

"Can't be a kill-joy! Got to go through with it! Try not to *think* it 's going to be bad, and you 'll be all right—definitely."

The train started crashing through Belgium in the dark.

Later that evening, they sat in the lighted dining-car.

"I 'm not very talented at all these different currencies," Hugo said. "Next time one ought to have little purses and keep 'em all separate."

"Planning the next time already, are you?"

"*Nibs*!" The worshipping possessiveness of his glance reproved her.

"I don't want dinner. Truly, Hugo. How *do* you expect me to eat dinner? Can't you just pay for your own?"

Hugo looked stung.

"Oh, but look here, you must eat something! What about a little soup?"

Nice hot soup! He had no imagination, this man she was married to!

ACROSS the gangway which ran between the tables, another man sat facing her. He might have come off the boat, although she did not remember seeing him on board. Or he might have got in at Bruges or Brussels. He was a foreigner, by his beard. Not old—those unshaven men were very misleading! A Frenchman, she thought, or a Belgian of the best type.

As Hugo ate through his dinner with a mixture of stolidity and concern, she became aware that the man opposite was watching her. Thoughtfully, speculatively, without insolence—watching her. Twice her eyes met his, which were grave and keen.

She liked those eyes, and his competent hands.

"I say, old girl, these waiter-fellahs will think we 've had a row."

She wanted to say: "Oh, hell, I don't care what they think!" But that would have been too steep for poor old Hugo, who was as badly let in for this disaster of a honeymoon as she was.

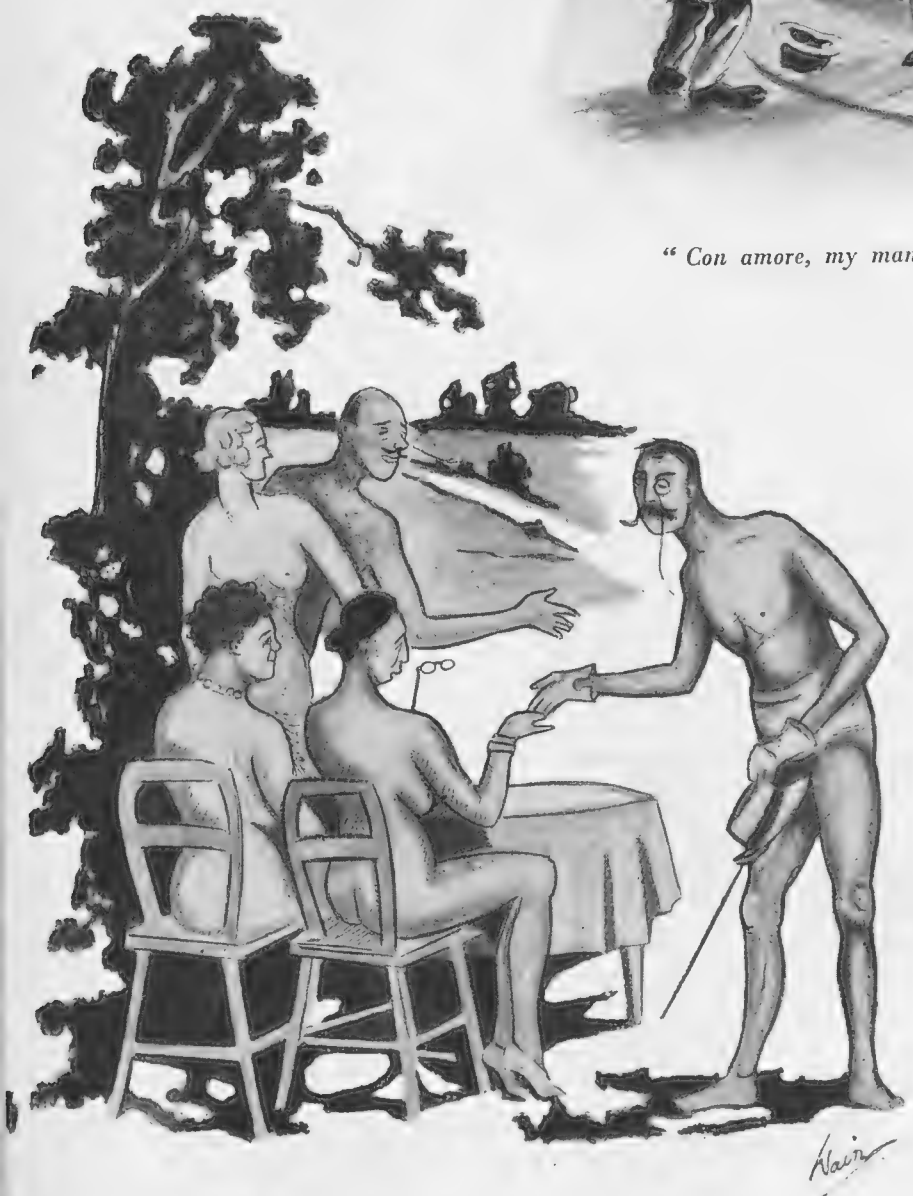
So she only said: "No, they won't. They know Englishmen and their wives never talk; only Englishmen and their

(*Continued on page 72*)

YOU DON'T HAVE TO LAUGH...

" I don't know the size of his collars, but my fingers just meet round his neck "

" Con amore, my man, con amore ! "



" Excuse my Glove "

" Gimme an Angel's Kiss "

Drawings by
Houghton, Goetz,
Wain, Rouson,
and Durcan

"Just my luck! I always wanted to be cremated"

"Can I show you anything, Sir?"

"Aw, you Big Baby!"

"... AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH"

A Dramatic Critic Lets Himself Go

By
Herbert Farjeon

Illustrations by Frank Ford

One of the most insufferably conceited playwrights

Dramatic critics cannot always say what they think. Their tongues are tied—or, perhaps, having heard their remarks between the acts, we should say that their pens are shackled—by the canons of good taste and the law of libel. In accordance, however, with the Christmas spirit of peace on earth and good will toward all men, we have decided to let one critic have a fling for once. In the following paragraphs Mr. Herbert Farjeon has been given permission to let off some of the steam suppressed during the past twelve months, and to say exactly what he thinks about whatever shows he chooses, with only this restriction: that none of the plays named shall be real plays, and none of the players real players. So here goes. . .

Still Step-mothering.—Miss Hettie Hetherington came out last week in a new comedy by Mr. Carstairs Carruthers entitled *Diana Does It Again*. Miss Hetherington, who has been on the stage now for close on sixty years, must be about the oldest actress unburied. Nevertheless, she still resolutely refuses to play anything older than a step-mother.

Truth About Carruthers.—I regret to say that *Diana Does It Again* is quite a clever piece of work, containing better epigrams than I could have composed myself. This is unfortunate in view of the fact that Mr. Carruthers is one of the most insufferably conceited playwrights now gaining inspiration at Mayfair cocktail parties. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to be able to say that this extremely obnoxious young man had written a thoroughly bad play.

Star Spoils Play.—The part with which Mr. Carruthers has provided Miss Hetherington at the Thalia is that of a wife who is just beginning to feel her middle-age. The message of the play is that we should accept life rather than fight against it. Since Miss Hetherington has not been middle-aged for more than a score of years, the message completely misses fire.

Future For False Teeth.—The plain truth of the matter is that Miss Hetherington, who was never a very good actress anyway, should be on the retired list. Her famous false teeth, now mentioned in print for the first time, would be more in place at the close of a Benefit Performance than at the first night of a new piece.

Wondering how she had the face to do it

Well-Cast Ingénue.—Of the rest of the company little need be said. The ingénue has clearly been chosen for her personal appearance, which effectively fails to divert the sympathies of the audience from the leading lady. A packed house gave Miss Hetherington a rousing reception at the finish, and then went home wondering how she had the face to do it. As a matter of fact, she hasn't.

Concerning Cutie.—The big new musical comedy at the Levity is called *Buenos Buena*, and has obviously been put on to satisfy the vanity of Miss Cutie Cowslip, the manager's mistress. Miss Cowslip is an aluminium blonde with moderately good legs, but her nose is like the beak of a parrot, her neck is a couple of inches too short, and she has a curiously mean look about the eyes, which are small and set too closely together.

Slap-Stuff.—Miss Cowslip has, or had, a voice of some quality, but it

A good detective might sometimes discover their real opinion

is less pleasing than it was a couple of years ago, owing to the fact that she drinks too much. As usual, the chorus is by far the best part of the show, and is particularly on the spot in the concerted number: "We 've slapped this, we 've slapped that, we 've slapped everything now."

Buried Views.—The rapturous notices which have been accorded *Buenos Buena* in the Press are, of course, that, being a twenty-thousand-pound production, it is certain to run for donkey's months. Critics are constitutionally afraid to damn sure-fire musical successes, although a good detective might sometimes discover their real opinion adroitly wrapped up in a relative clause which is deeply buried in the middle of half a column of unqualified superlatives.

Large-Size Aladdin.—The new pantomime at the Queen's Theatre, Battersbridge, is so dull that I went to sleep before it started. When I woke up, it was to hear all the songs I have been hearing all the year, and all the jokes I had forgotten ten years ago. Miss Chrissie Dashleigh, who plays Aladdin, suggests that there must somewhere be a farm for fattening up principal boys for Christmas, like turkeys.

Effect of Binkie.—Almost all the Christmas shows are just one point worse this year than they were last. At *Binkie in Boo-Boo-Land* I heard one child laugh once, and saw three carried out crying. This is an extremely refined little show, in which a number of precocious child-players prove totally incompetent.

A farm for fattening up principal boys for Christmas

But there is a glorious performing horse, which gave half the critics a chance to go out and buy Christmas presents.

Vive la France!—There can be little doubt that the French players who have come over for a season at the Intimate are the most marvellous thing of the year. But there is some doubt, because I couldn't understand a word they said. At the same time, it must be confessed that they are easier to understand than the English synopsis of the play on the programme.

Return of Lovelace.—An enthusiastic audience welcomed Mr. Rupert Lovelace back to the Kemble Theatre a night or two ago, where he reappeared as Sir Walter Raleigh, after his long South African tour. It is said that Mr. Lovelace lost more money in South Africa than any actor has ever done before, and no wonder! He is, by the way, not quite so effeminate in private life as he appears.

A Great Actress.—To conclude the week, a word on Miss Estelle Bridport, whose exquisite performance in *Edward III., Part V.*, should certainly be seen. After such a performance, it is not enough to praise Miss Bridport. Nothing less than taking her out to tea would suffice. And perhaps, after tea, who knows. . . . [*Final page of copy mislaid.*—Ed.]

OUT OF THE WAY

A Murder Story—With a Difference

Illustrations by

Stephen Spurrier

I WAITED for nearly half an hour before I found my opportunity. Actually, I waited on the other side of the street, walking up and down, occasionally entering a shop and purchasing some trivial article in order to allay any suspicion. In point of fact, I can remember distinctly now that in my pockets, as I crossed the street, having seen my opportunity, there were no less than four boxes of matches and three packets of cigarettes; these represented, in all, seven visits, entirely unnecessary visits, except from the point of view of caution, to shops round and about.

But something happened within the flat, some business which necessitated the porter leaving the front door just long enough to enable me to enter unobserved; and as I slipped up the stairs, carefully avoiding the lift, I counted myself fortunate that I had only had that half an hour to wait: it might well have been an hour, or longer still.

Jay's flat was on the second floor, and I reached the door fairly certain that I had not been seen. I knocked. I had no fear that any servant would open that door, for this was a Thursday afternoon, and on Thursday afternoons—as I knew well—Jay's only maid-of-all-work was out. It was possible, of course, that Jay himself would not be in, but I was lucky. In a few moments I heard steps approaching from the other side of the door, and a second later he opened it to me.

"Hullo, Geoff," he said.

But one quick glance at him convinced me that I was far from being a welcome visitor. I smiled to myself; but I hoped to God that the smile was not obvious to him, that he had received no hint what it portended.

"I've come for a few seconds only, Jay," I said quietly, striving all I could to keep my voice even. "Just a word with you, if you please."

He looked at me, but I don't think that my expression gave anything away.

"All right," he said, rather reluctantly it seemed to me.

I passed through the door and he shut it behind me. He led the way to his sitting-room, where at once I sank into an arm-chair on one side of the fire, he taking the only other one opposite.

"Well?" I said.

JAY looked at me. In my heart I could find no shred of pity or sympathy for him, yet it was the ghost of that Jay whom I had known and liked who stared at me now with sunken, red-rimmed eyes. His face was haggard and very white, deep lines seared his cheeks, and even his lips were colourless. His fingers, too, were ever on the move, twitching spasmodically as they rested on the arm of his chair. Knowing the state of health in which I was, I wondered whether I myself looked any better.

"Well?" I said again.

"This morning," said Jay.

"Yes." I spoke harshly. "This morning. Hung by the neck until she was dead."

"Oh, God!" said Jay, and the rising inflection in his voice was almost a scream. "Don't tell me that . . . tell me it was sudden . . . not *until* she was dead."

His whole attitude disgusted me.

"Hung by the neck until she was dead," I repeated without pity, and, strangely enough, my voice sounded perfectly even, perfectly emotionless. "And for a crime that she did not commit!"

Jay looked at me. There was a feverish light in his eyes, but he said no word.

"I loved her," I said simply. "She has died for a crime which you committed. I couldn't prevent it . . . but I can at least avenge it. Make your peace, Jay. You know what I have come for."

Once again Jay stared at me speechless, but in his eyes I could now see the dawn of horror and fear as he sensed my intention. But he seemed to be paralysed, utterly unable to move; he just sat there facing me . . . and as he sat there I shot him.

I WASTED no time after that. I merely made certain that he was dead, and then I left the flat. I made no attempt to make his death appear as suicide; I made no attempt whatsoever to conceal anything that might have betrayed my presence in the flat that night. I went down those stairs whistling, that is the extraordinary thing . . . whistling! I was happy for the first time that day. I didn't care who saw me now. I walked out of that block of flats with my shoulders square and my head held high. But I did feel the need of a drink, so on my way home I called in at the club, and the first person I saw was that ass Clintock, of the Yard.

I went straight up to him.

. . . Well, I had her revolver and I shot him

" So you murdered her this morning ! " I said quietly.

He looked at me in surprise. I think there must have been something very strange in my appearance. In a moment or two, however, he laughed : that nasty, superior laugh which he affects so frequently. He thought I was drunk, I suppose. Well, perhaps I was . . . but not drunk with liquor.

" I don't know what you mean."

He spoke very precisely, and something in his voice, in his manner, annoyed me, as his voice always annoyed me.

" You murdered that girl," I said, " you and the law between you. You produced a perfect case, and that was quite sufficient for you. You didn't care that it wasn't true . . . you had your case . . . your murder . . . your victim for the public. Well done, Clintock ! Well done ! "

I left him standing there, amazed. I had my drink. I left the club. As I passed through the hall, I saw him sitting on a sofa staring at me, making a remark to some acquaintance seated beside him. He must have said something about me, for the other looked up questioningly.

But I came straight home. I took out some paper and my fountain-pen, and I started to write.

* * *

By Gerard Fairlie

IT was after one of those City dinners, to which Jay had taken me, that he first suggested it.

" Look here," he said, " I 'm feeling frightfully fit. Let 's go to Harker's and dance with Elisabeth B."

" Harker's ? " I said. " Where 's Harker's ? "

I remember Jay roared with laughter.

" You don't mean to tell me you 're so countrified that you don't know Harker's ? My dear man, it 's a long way the most famous of all of the second-class night haunts. It 's a tip-top place, I 'll tell you ! Drink to any hour of the night, plenty of amusing people, and, above them all, Elisabeth B. ! You must come."

" All right," I said. " I 'll go anywhere you like. Lead the way."

Jay hailed a taxi, and we got inside. During the journey from the City hall he gave me a little information about our destination. It appeared that Harker's had won fame in a week, all because of Elisabeth B. Situated in the premises originally occupied by the raided, and since defunct, Majestic Club, Harker's had been started very much in the style of all the other secondary night-clubs in the vicinity, as a means of exploiting drink and women to the very young and very old rich males of London. It had, however, shown instant signs of failure. For one thing, the beauty of the women was conspicuous by its absence, and, for another, so were the younger rich. Then the management, at their wits' ends, had discovered Elisabeth B. How, nobody quite knew. But one night she had appeared and done her dance. By chance, and by good luck for Mr. Harker, several bored but gilded youths had happened to be present, Jay one of their number. They had spread the glad news abroad.

I gathered indirectly, during the taxi-drive, that Jay was an important and well-known patron of the place. When we arrived, my impression was confirmed. He led the way to a small, ill-lit tobacconist's shop, next door to the entrance of the club.

" We get our tickets here," he said, with a wink. " It 's a sort of ruse of Harker's. That way the place looks far more like a club, though why so much trouble should be taken over such an obvious trick I can't imagine."

Jay bought the tickets and chatted amicably with a Hebrew gentleman behind the counter.

" Elisabeth B. all right ? " he ventured.

" Ah ! Ze peach. Yes, beautiful ! "

" Good," said Jay, leading the way out.

" That man disgusts me," he said, turning. " But I 'm always polite here. It pays."

We passed through the portals proper, between two of the most enormous commissionaires I have ever seen, and found ourselves faced by a dingy set of winding stairs. Down these Jay led me, until we were faced by a closed door. Jay knocked.

In a moment it was opened to us and we passed into the extreme end of a very long room. The end at which we entered had been turned into a cloak room, and was partially curtained off. We gave up our hats and coats, and I followed Jay into the room itself.

The scene that met my eyes was very typical. It was rather a disordered state of things ; tables at odd distances, red sofas round the room showing up almost violently against the orange of the walls and ceiling. A few gilt and rather-worse-for-wear chairs were dotted round the sides, and, at the end, on an elevated dais, an orchestra composed of negro women rested on their instruments preparatory to another bout of violent music.

Out of the Way—*Continued from page 49*

The place was fairly full, a strikingly cosmopolitan crowd forming the so-called members of the club. There were men resplendent in full evening dress, with buttonholes; men in dinner jackets; men in well-tailored lounge suits; and a few, difficult to place, in curiously shabby garments. There were men quite sober, like ourselves; men not quite sober, and men obviously drunk. The room was badly ventilated and full of smoke. There was a lot of noise, of laughter, shrill and unreal and rather drunken. And there were the women, brightly dressed and vividly made up, most of them obvious and very easy to place. I couldn't help wondering how they'd look in the cruel light of early morning and feeling rather sick.

I KNEW Jay very well. We had been at the same house at school, and in the same battery in France, and I knew only too well that his sudden access to money had been anything but a good influence to him. I had rather expected the sight that met my eyes, but from his description had hoped for something better. However, I was there, and I determined to see the thing through.

We sat down at a table, and I noticed many eyes turned towards us. A few of the girls smiled at me. I smiled blandly back. Jay was laughing and shouting greetings to everyone around.

The band interrupted him, however, and I watched the dancing. Jay had ordered champagne and was doing himself well. He always did, and I realised I might have some trouble with him later on. However, I was entering into the rather happy-go-lucky, even if sordid, atmosphere of the place, and I looked around to see if there was anyone with whom I'd care to dance.

My eyes came to rest in a little cut-away portion of the room which I had not previously noticed. It was situated just on the right of the band and held only two tables. At one of these a girl sat with a particularly unpleasant-looking man. He was in evening dress, and I should say a trifle more than half drunk. His shirt was crumpled and his hair untidy. He was making rather ineffectual attempts to paw the girl. I was just about to turn away when I noticed the girl's hands. Perhaps you don't take an interest in hands? I do. Hers were rather long and slender, and even at that distance it was easy to see that the nails were beautifully manicured. They looked thoroughly refined. I looked upwards at her face. Strictly speaking, she was not beautiful, but her features were small and delicate, and she would very easily have passed for pretty. At the moment, she bore an expression of disgust which was singularly attractive, and was occasioned, no doubt, by her companion. Suddenly, after a particularly violent attempt to take her hand, the man almost collapsed off his chair. In a flash the girl was standing. Words were rushing from her lips, but I was too far off to hear. What I could notice, however, was that she had a really wonderful figure.

I touched Jay on the arm and nodded in her direction.

"Who's that?" I asked.

He followed the direction, and sat bolt upright.

"Elisabeth B.!" he shouted. "Elisabeth B.!"

The girl turned round and saw him. She smiled and waved. Then, pointing to the band, she made a few steps.

"Afterwards," she said.

She then hurried across the room towards the curtain which did service as the cloak-room.

"She's going to dance," said Jay, "then she's coming over here. Now, old man, look out for something!"

The music stopped, and the dancers sorted themselves and rejoined their tables. As soon as they had done so there was a long roll of the drum. Then the band broke out in a particularly wild fox-trot.

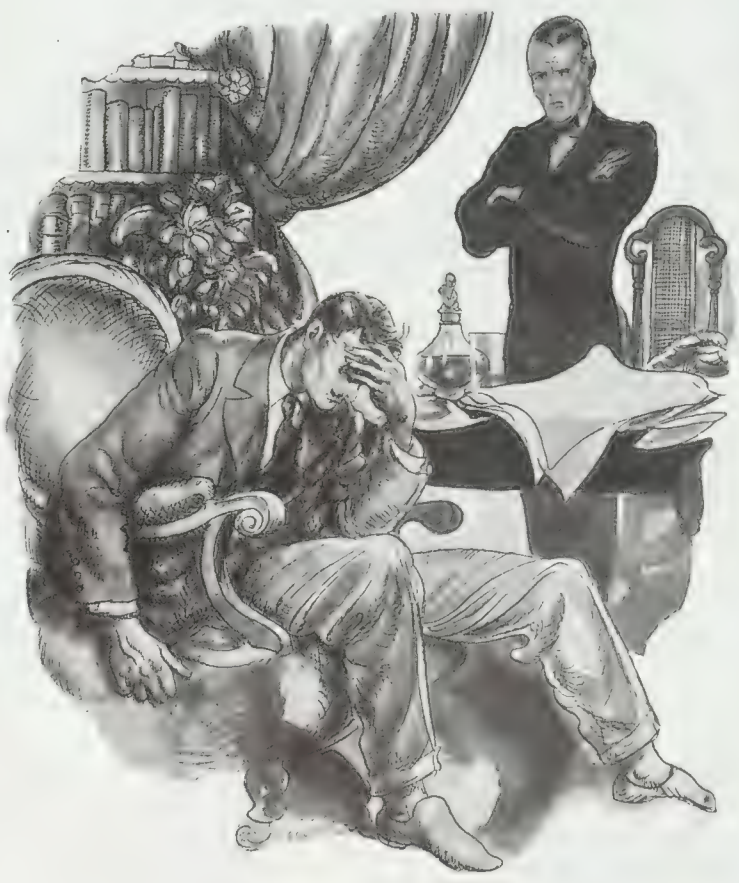
I have seen a great deal of exhibition dancing, from famous couples at fashionable night clubs and hotels on the Riviera down to the inevitable apache dancers of the lowest haunts of Montmartre. Frankly, most of it leaves me cold. But the moment Elisabeth B. entered the room I knew I was going to see something unusually good.

I did. It was not that the girl did anything very brilliant. Her dance was the same, or much the same, as all the others, but the interpretation of the steps was different. In the first place, she had the most wonderful figure it has ever been my privilege to see, perfectly proportioned, not too tall, nor too full, nor too thin, not too strong, nor too frail . . . just perfect. And she was graceful to a degree which I have never seen before or since, graceful even in a violent modern dance, which is saying a very great deal. With the room darkened and a beam of light playing on her, she looked beautiful.

I lost my heart to her completely. I'll own it now, so that there may be no mistake about the reasons for my conduct in the sequence of events about to be related. If she had asked me then to marry her, I'd have laughed at the consequences and done so without the slightest hesitation.

But the finish to her dance was positively spectacular. As she was moving on the polished floor, the electric lights had faded into nothingness. The room was illuminated only by five candles, stuck rather high at one end of the room. Elisabeth B. sank to the ground as the music died away: abruptly she pulled a little jewelled revolver from the folds of her dress . . . then five reports and darkness, for each candle had been fluffed out by a leaden message directed by her hand.

When the lights were on again the place broke loose, just as many years before I had seen a very similar audience break loose over a song by a great singer in a studio of Paris. It was an extraordinary sight, and the pandemonium did not cease for several minutes. But at last the band broke out again, the noise stopped, and couples began dancing. Very soon Elisabeth B. was forgotten in the drunkenness and only slightly veiled immorality of the place. It was a striking example of the mockery of public popularity.



Jay broke down at that

In a few minutes Elisabeth B., dressed now in a smart blue costume, came to our table. Jay introduced me and she sat between us. Jay, who was getting very talkative, carried all the conversation, but I was quite happy to sit back and watch her. My first impression had been right; Elisabeth B. was not beautiful, but she was very prettily attractive. I think she depended a great deal on her expression; and her hands were simply lovely.

I GOT to know Elisabeth B. very well after that. She often came out with me to lunch or dinner, and I often went down to Harker's to see her dance. Sometimes on these evenings I was accompanied by Jay, but more often not. He had a lot of interests in the evenings, and a lot

(*Continued on page 59*)

The Deb's Progress:

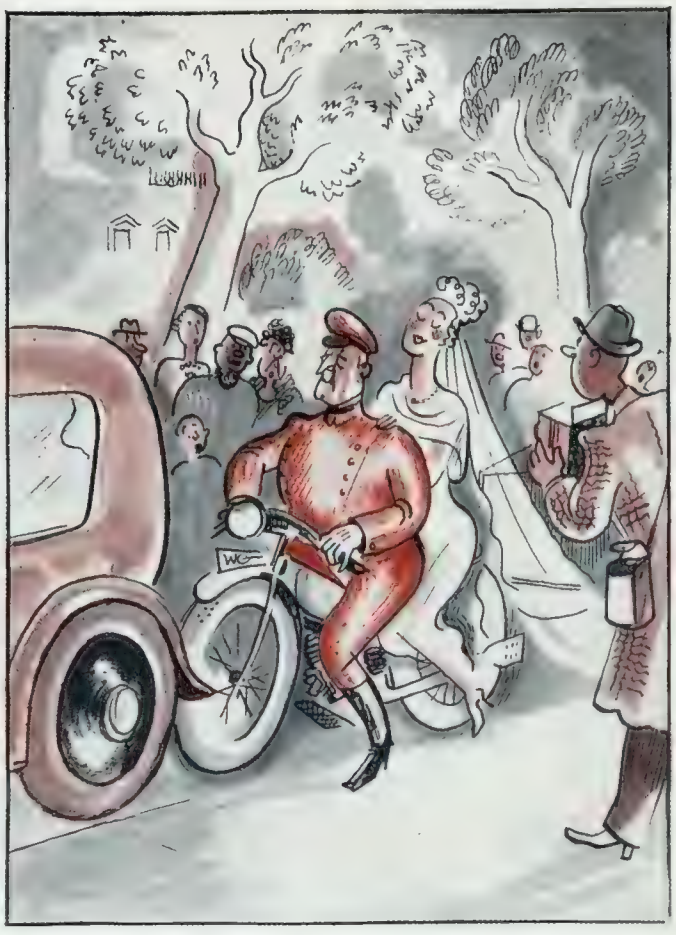
No. 1. By Molly Bishop

Invaluable Advice to Those About to Come Out

Out-dress Your Rivals at Ascot . . .

The Deb's Progress: Invaluable Advice

If you want to stand the slightest chance of being noticed among your co-debs——



——be daring, be dashing, be different. Devise a more original way of going to Court

Choose something really exotic for your own particular pet, and take it with you wherever you go

Start a new Crazy Craze and take your slimming exercise at the same time. Piccadilly is always at your disposal

to Those About to Come Out: No. 2. By Walter Goetz

Try the Domestic Touch on the gossip-writers. Tell 'em you spend one evening every week at home

Enlightening the Masses in Hyde Park is strenuous work, but it 's bound to get you into the limelight

Novel parties are always good "copy." Ask the Fire Brigade to a cocktail bathe on the roof of the Babylon Hotel . . .

And when you 've hooked the Catch of the Season, you can reflect with pride that hard work brings its own reward

By Harold Simpson

CHARACTERS.

TIM. LUCY.

SCENE.—*A sitting-room. There is a French window at back, and a door* L. *When the* CURTAIN *rises the room is dark. The sound of the French window being opened is heard, then the noise of someone stumbling over a piece of furniture.*

TIM: Damn!

The electric light is suddenly switched on, revealing LUCY *standing just inside the door* L. *She is wearing an attractive peignoir, and holds a revolver in her hand, which she is pointing at* TIM. *Evidently she has just been aroused from slumber.*

LUCY (*pointing revolver*): Hands up! (*She suddenly recognises* TIM.) You! (*She instinctively lowers the revolver.*)

TIM: Yes, just me. I came in a little unexpectedly, that's all.

LUCY: But why are you here . . . at this hour? (*Suddenly.*) Tim . . . is anything the matter with . . . with George? (*She comes towards him.*)

TIM: Not so far as *I* know. If I'm any judge of character your husband is snoring in the sleeper to Edinburgh by now. (*She makes a little disdainful gesture.*) Sorry, Lucy, I didn't mean to be cheap. But the sight of you after all these months seemed to go to my head.

LUCY (*in a choked voice*): How did you get in?

TIM: Through the window. I remembered your little habit of leaving the French window unbolted.

LUCY: Beast!

TIM: Oh, don't misunderstand me! I was merely referring to your notorious bad memory.

LUCY: What have you come for?

TIM: To see you.

LUCY (*coldly*): Please go.

TIM: Not till I've had a word with you. After risking the unwelcome attentions of an intelligent police constable, I'm at least entitled to that.

LUCY: I said all I had to say to you months ago.

TIM: But I didn't say half of what *I* had to say to *you*. (*More seriously.*) Lucy . . . I simply had to see you to-night.

LUCY (*in a faint voice*): What do you mean?

TIM: I suddenly felt lonely, horribly lonely. Oh, I know you think I'm a rotter, but honest to God, Lucy, there has only ever been one woman to me.

LUCY: We discussed all that before. And I told you then . . .

TIM (*interrupting her*): You told me what your conscience told you to tell me. You're a married woman . . . married to a dull dog. . . . (*As she makes another gesture.*) Oh, yes, I know. But while I'd love to be as moral as George, I'd hate to be as dull.

LUCY: You'd better go.

TIM: Not till I've said what I've got to say. All these months I've been thinking about you . . . thinking of what you said to me. But it wasn't you who was speaking . . . it was that stupid little conscience of yours.

LUCY: Will you please go?

TIM (*ignoring her*): Your conscience was saying: "You don't love him . . . you're a married woman!" But your heart was saying: "I'm married, but I love him!"

LUCY (*stung into reply*): If you thought that, why did you leave me?

TIM: Because, like a fool, I respected you. But in these lonely months I've grown wise. . . . I know that respect hasn't an earthly when it's up against love.

Decoration by V. Lazzolo

LUCY: And you imagine that I am in love with you!

TIM: I don't imagine . . . I know.

LUCY: Poor conceited fool!

TIM: Eh?

LUCY (*coming closer to him*): Now perhaps you 'll listen to *me* for a moment. You say that I 'm married to a dull dog. Perhaps I am . . . Heaven knows I hold no brief for George. But you who say that are one of his best friends . . . so-called.

TIM: One is always candid about one's best friends. Though, of course, that applies more especially to women.

LUCY (*imperiously*): Be quiet! (*Continuing*) And yet though you are one of his best friends you didn't scruple to try to steal his wife from him.

TIM (*pointing a finger at her*): Conscience again!

LUCY: No, not conscience, but plain hard fact. Men who have no conscience wrap up Fact in a blanket and call it Romance.

TIM: Good for you! But why a blanket?

LUCY: Because it 's a non-conductor to every sense of decency. Oh, I 'm willing to admit that I nearly fell for you. But life was very humdrum at the moment . . . a little excitement just then looked like a promising starter. But luckily I realised in time that I was putting my money on the wrong horse.

TIM (*mockingly*): You 've been reading the *Sporting Life*!

LUCY (*ignoring him*): After all . . . the love of a good man is not to be despised.

TIM (*very mockingly*): See children's copybook . . . page five!

LUCY: George may be dull, but he 's a dear, and he 's awfully kind to me.

TIM: Who wouldn't be?

LUCY: But you . . . well, you haven't one single redeeming point.

TIM: Thanks, frightfully!

LUCY: You have no sense of honour, no decency. Your mind is a sort of sexpool, eager to absorb any woman who is fool enough to fall into it.

TIM: Oh, I say!

LUCY: You imagine that you 're very attractive to women. Well, perhaps you are, in a kind of way.

TIM: Thanks, frightfully, again!

LUCY: But women—sensible women, anyhow—very quickly see through you. Those who don't, come a cropper. You did your best to make *me* come a cropper and you failed. Now you steal into my house in the middle of the night when my husband is away . . . and *you* are one of my husband's best friends! Well . . . you 've got to take your punishment.

TIM: What 's the idea? Whistling for the intelligent police constable and giving me in charge for burglary?

LUCY (*coldly*): I 've said all I 've got to say.

She turns away. There is silence for a moment. He stands looking at her and his mood changes. His cynical, mocking manner drops from him and he speaks seriously, almost tenderly.

TIM: Lucy, old girl, I 'm terribly sorry. I was a beast to force myself on you like this . . . to imagine for one moment that you 'd listen to me. You 're perfectly right. . . . I *am* a rotter, and George is worth a dozen of me. I promise that I 'll never trouble you again. (*He pauses for a moment, but as she makes no sign he continues.*) Lucy . . . just to show that you forgive me . . . will you say good-night?

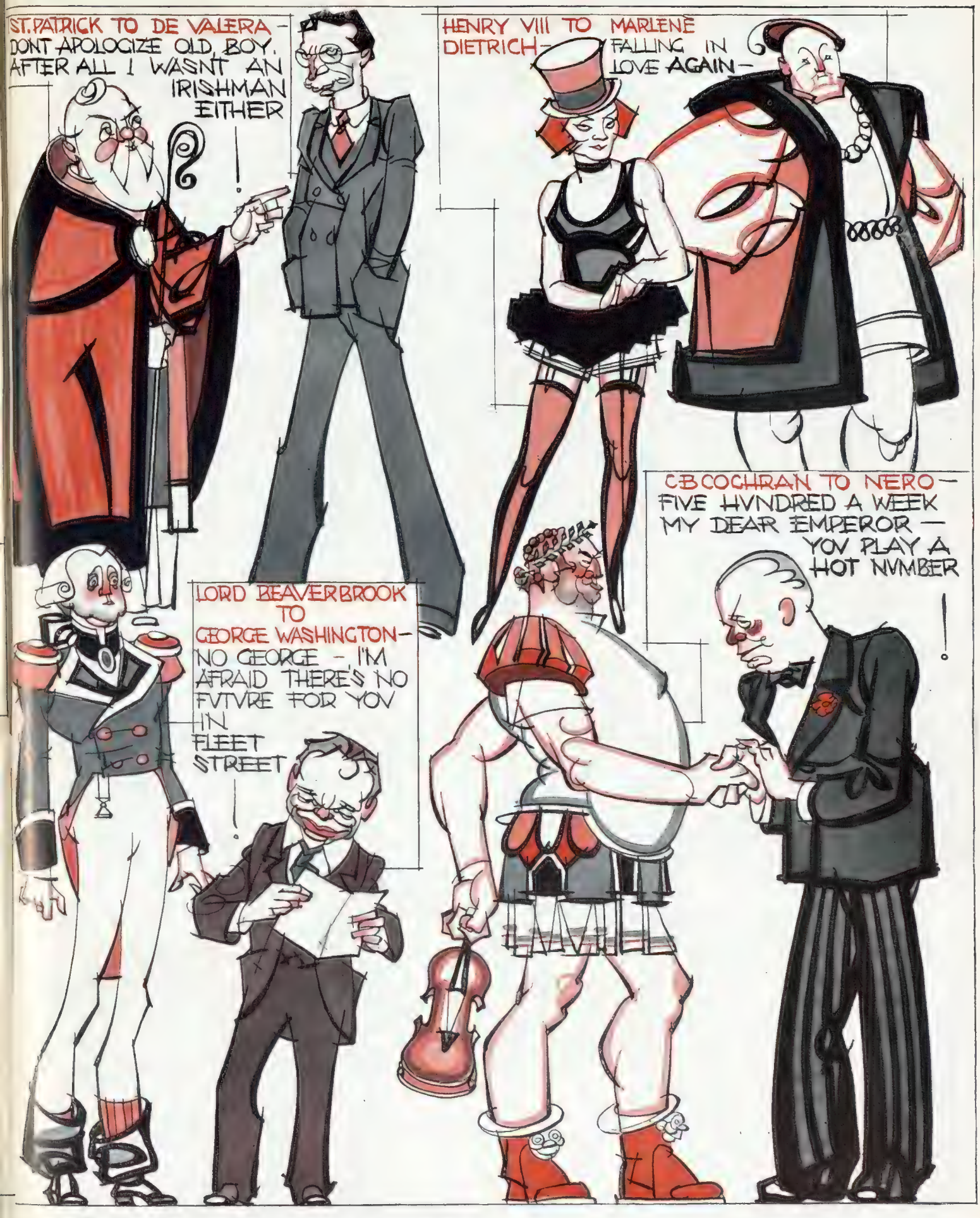
He takes a step towards her. She whips round and levels the revolver at him. (*Nervously*). Look out . . . don't do that . . . it's all right . . . I 'm going.

LUCY (*smiling, and still levelling revolver*): You 're not!

BLACK OUT.

HANDS ACROSS THE PAST: A SELECTION

Arranged and



OF ANCIENT AND MODERN MEETINGS

Executed by Sherriffs

BY LESLIE BUTLER

THE RECRUIT TO THE NUDIST COLONY BRINGS A HOT-WATER BOTTLE

Out of the Way: By Gerard Fairlie

(Continued from page 50)

of friends, and he was difficult to get hold of. In any case, to be quite frank, I was just as pleased when he didn't come, because I loved having the girl to myself.

It is one of the regrets of my life that I don't think, in all the time I knew her, I ever quite won the entire confidence of Elisabeth B. Obviously she belonged in no way to either of the classes in which she mixed down at Harker's, either the women or the men. Let there be no mistake, she was *not* a bad woman; but then, little things gave her away sometimes, telling me in blazing letters that I was a fool to fall in love with a girl so very much below me socially. I write this now, long after the events happened, because, for her own sake, I must, and not because I am a snob. But there are some little unimportant things which rankle; and after marriage these are apt to kindle a fire of difficulty between men and women of really different stations in life.

Well, Elisabeth B. was happy in my company, glad to lunch or sup with me, grateful when I looked after her unobtrusively at Harker's or saw her to her lodgings after her work was done. She treated me rather as a girl might treat an elder brother, confiding in me all her little difficulties, rather taking my presence with her for granted, and looking to me for protection. And, by Heaven! she needed it, poor child, down in that hell called Harker's, where a decent man was the exception and drunken desire always played the leading part. No word of love ever passed my lips, and that for two reasons: I was in a miserable state of uncertainty myself, and, secondly, I was afraid of her mistaking what I meant. She knew little of men really, but what she did know was wholly bad; I dared not even ask her for a kiss.

Then, one day—I can remember it distinctly, because it was exactly two months after I had first seen her—Jay rang me up in the morning. I could hear by his voice that he was greatly disturbed, and I readily consented to lunch with him.

We met at the club, and found a lonely table. Then Jay told me the whole wretched story. He had been drunk the night before.

"Dined with some fellows at a restaurant," he said. "Not much food, plenty of wine. They were a cheery lot, damn them, and they made me go on with them to Harker's."

He stopped. He was very white and nervous, absolutely unlike the real Jay that I knew so well. His attitude upset me; I hate to see a strong man behaving like a weakling.

"Well?" I asked shortly.

"Curse it," he said, "it's no good mincing matters. She was there, of course. As sweet as ever. And she came to sit with me, as usual. The others thought she was the same as the rest of the women there. They were out of hand. So was I, for that matter. After she'd shot out the candles . . . in the darkness . . . I caught her and kissed her. I had her hand . . . holding the revolver . . . in mine. That swine Harker suddenly pulled her from me in the darkness. He . . . he . . . well, I had her revolver, and I shot him."

For a moment the horror of the situation prevented me from clear thought. Then:

"Why aren't you under arrest?"

"They've arrested her instead. They thought she did it! You see, when the lights went up, I'd disappeared . . . the gun was on the floor . . . her gun . . . and the sixth chamber empty."

There was one moment of silence.

"Good God, Jay!" I cried. "You sit there and calmly tell me that an innocent woman is in prison for a crime which you committed, and you've made no attempt to get her out?"

"Oh, I know," said Jay. "I've been telling myself that ever since. But don't you understand that if I do I'm done for? You know my father; you know what it'll mean with him. And then, you see, last night's dinner was to celebrate my engagement to John Smaile's sister. And besides . . . they'll hang me!"

I did some quick thinking.

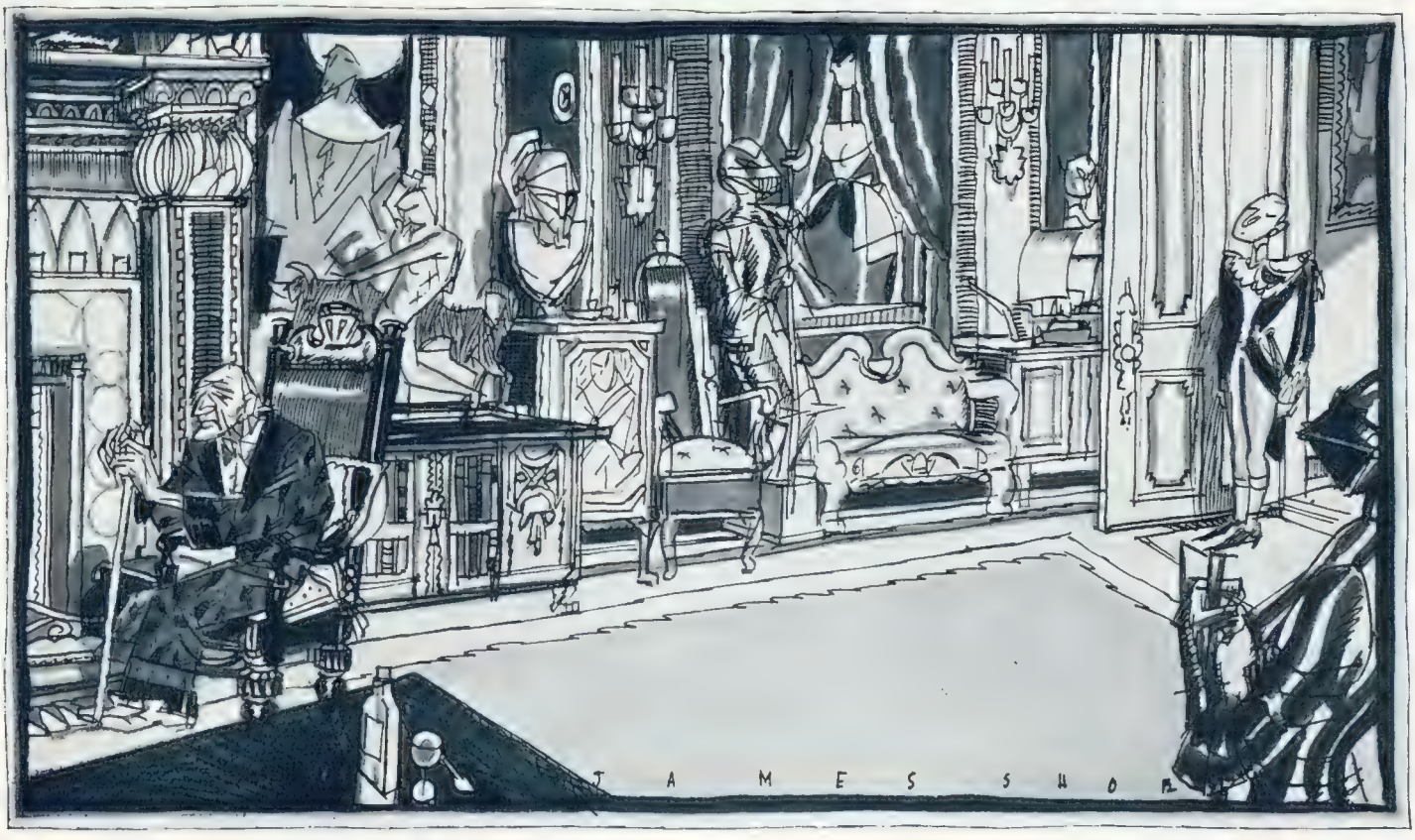
"Now, look here, Jay," I said. "I'm going to speak very plainly. You are going straight now to tell the whole truth to Miss Smaile, and then straight on to the police to tell them the whole story, too. And what is more, I am going to see that you do it."

"I can't!"

"You can, and you're going to. If the police are not in full possession of the facts by six o'clock this evening, they will be very soon after . . . because I'll tell them."

Jay broke down at that. I got up, feeling that part of the world had fallen about my head. I got as far as the lounge

(Continued on page 61)



"Merry Christmas, m'Lord"

Keeping their Hands in at Christmas

A FEW SUGGESTIONS FOR FILM-STARS

Out of the Way: By Gerard Fairlie

(Continued from page 59)

of the club, then everything went flying round me, and I am told that I went over like a shot rabbit.

I AM told that it was a see-saw business between life and death for eleven days. Then, on the twelfth morning, I was visibly better, and by the fourteenth was out of danger. On the fifteenth they discovered that I had lost my memory. Personally, I knew quite well who I was, but not in the least anything that had happened since the war. It was a very funny sensation. People used to try to remind me of things by recalling incidents. Sometimes, with a great effort, I could remember vaguely; more often not. I remember my astonishment on being shown my Cambridge blazer with my name inside; I had forgotten all about my life at the 'Varsity immediately after the war. I was shown photographs of the 'Varsity match in which I played, and groups of teams. People were got in to remind me of incidents and places, but I seldom recognised them, and the few I did only came back to me after a tremendous effort of concentration which left me weak and irritable. By degrees, however, I learnt something about my life in the preceding five years, and slowly I regained my health.

About two months after my breakdown, my father and I were sitting in his study after dinner, talking and reading. I picked up an evening paper and looked at the headlines. Sometimes I got valuable clues as to the past in that way. I glanced through the paper, which seemed to me particularly dull. At last, with a stifled yawn, I threw it down.

"How dull," I said.

My father looked up.

"Geoffrey," he said, "do you remember anything about a club called Harker's?"

"Harker's?"

"Yes. You sometimes spoke of it before you got ill. I believe you used to go there quite a lot."

I thought. The name seemed vaguely familiar, but I couldn't pin any brain-picture down to it.

"No," I answered, "I don't think so."

"I thought you might have," my father replied. "At all events, read about that murder trial connected with it. A girl, you know, convicted of the murder of the proprietor. She killed him in a squabble down in Harker's. A dreadful, sordid story. What's her name?"

My father picked up the paper and started to look through it. On looking back now I realise that everything depended on his finding the name before I spoke. Everything! My life, Elisabeth B.'s life, Jay's life. But it was I who spoke first, stupidly, idiotically.

"I'm tired, Dad," I said. "I'm off to bed."

My father put down the paper, and got up. He smiled at me.

"Right you are, old man," he said. "Sleep well!"

"Good-night, Dad."

I SHOULD think it was a good month later, when I really was quite strong again physically, although I was still as ignorant as ever regarding my immediate past, that I received my rude awakening.

My father had taken a flat down at Brighton, hoping that the air might do me good, and yesterday, a glorious spring morning, I awoke with the sun streaming down upon me and the birds chirruping cheerfully just outside. I couldn't resist the appeal of the day, so I got up, dressed, and went into the dining-room to forage, as it was still very early. I found some fruit, and as the morning paper had come, sat down by the open window to read.

Blazing headlines met my eyes. "The Night Club Murderess Executed" was one, and "Expected Reprieve Does Not Come" another. I began to read the case. In the first few lines it was briefly outlined. At the beginning of the second paragraph the name of the executed girl appeared. It was Elisabeth Burley.

Something went snap in my head. I felt it go, and shut my eyes in pain. And then, almost like a moving picture, the story of Elisabeth B. passed in front of me, from the first moment that I had seen her down at Harker's, to the moment when I left Jay, a weak, piteous figure, his face buried in his hands, at the club. Dear, sweet, innocent Elisabeth B.! Betrayed to death by the cowardice of a man you thought your friend!

I have very little more to say. This epistle is nearly finished, nearly ready for the police. I have killed Jay, of course. I couldn't very well do anything else, although he was once my friend. So was Elisabeth B., except that she was ever so much more: I now know that I loved her.

But I shan't be long, dear Elisabeth B.! As soon as I've finished this, which I am writing to clear your name, I'm coming to you. I thought of giving myself up to the police. But they might think that I'm mad, my darling. I'm not mad, Elisabeth B., except madly in love with you. And I'm coming . . . now!

* * *

CLINTOCK, of the Yard, looked up from his desk, or, to be more accurate, from the manuscript which was in his hand. Detective-Inspector Framlingham, who was standing on the opposite side of the desk, smiled faintly.

"Well," said Clintock, "did you ever hear of anything like this before?"

"Frequently, Sir," said Inpector Framlingham. "The work of a disarranged mind."

"He's killed himself, you say?"

"Yes, Sir," said Framlingham. "On receipt of that . . . that story, we went round to the house; but he had been dead some hours."

"I see," said Clintock. "A shock for his father, I'm afraid." He paused, but only for a moment. "A coroner's verdict of suicide while of unsound mind, I suppose?"

Inspector Framlingham dutifully agreed.

"Well," said Clintock, "he was mad all right. Went up to an old Admiral in the club yesterday afternoon . . . said some surprising things . . . he thought the old josser was me." He laughed without humour. "The old man was still fuming when I met him over an hour later."

He paused. Inspector Framlingham smiled.

"Perhaps," said Clintock, "all three are best—shall we say, 'out of the way'?"

Inspector Framlingham dutifully thought they would say "out of the way." G. F.

"A Merry Christmas, my Man"

Lucy went forward quietly, and

DEARLY

The Oh-so-uplifting Story of a Good Man's Love (sez you!)

Lucy awoke with a start, struggled out of bed, flew barefoot across the room to the lavatory-basin and turned on the hot-water tap with frantic anxiety. Cold . . . quite cold! Her reddened fingers fluttered impatiently beneath the obdurately icy stream. Lukewarm . . . warmer . . . hottish, but, alas! not hot enough to necessitate the withdrawal of the investigating hand. She waited a few moments longer, but her mad optimism went unrewarded—the pipes had yielded the best they could do in the matter for that morning.

"And, of course, Henry will have a bath," said Lucy to herself, "just because it *is* cold."

She turned off the tap, moved over to the dressing-table and looked despondently at herself in the mirror. How lines showed up first thing in a morning, and how grey her hair was getting underneath! Not that it signified—she had never been a beauty, never had any youth worth calling youth, and had not the least objection to being forty . . . a little pale-faced woman with apprehensive eyes of a very clear amber brown. Her features were small and well-bred, her hair dark and silky, worn short, yet not too fashionably arranged to destroy a certain Peter Pan effect which the simplicity of her nature enhanced and emphasised.

Having opened the window wider and sniffed the leafy air of early autumn blowing round the corner from Regent's Park, Lucy got back into bed, still warm and friendly, and poured out the tea whose arrival had failed to awaken her. She sat very upright amongst the pillows, a lovable little figure in a washed-out mauve nightgown, nibbling bread and butter with an anxious face.

"It 's not the butter Henry likes, and I do hope Ellen has not put as much tea into his pot as she has into mine—far more than two teaspoons . . . 'no wonder the country is on the verge of bankruptcy.'"

Lucy sighed. The concluding observation had been submitted by the imaginary Henry, who habitually supplied characteristic postscripts to his wife's reflections. Lucy often wished she did not know, with quite such undeviating accuracy, exactly what her husband had to say about everything. It had a tarnishing effect, and was tiresome, too, like living perpetually with the ghost of a parrot.

Sipping her tea, she strained her ears for sounds in the house, and was rewarded by the squeak of the sweeper, the scurry of print skirts, the clatter of china piled on a tray, and "'Late as usual,'" she murmured to herself, twisting her mouth as Henry twisted his, and then allowing it to assume its normal aspect of wistful diffidence. "Poor things, they must often be tired in a morning . . . like us. 'Tired? And aren't they paid to be tired?'" Henry again—and in that majestically bland tone of voice with which he placed himself at the right hand of God by the enunciation of a single syllable.

Lucy, in moments of severe self-analysis, could never imagine what had brought about her marriage. She knew why she had accepted Henry's proposal: because she had been far too frightened to do anything else; but why he had proposed to her in the first instance was a mystery which fifteen years of discomfited misery had done nothing to solve. Rather the reverse. In fact, Lucy, who never thought evil of anyone—not even when they had illegitimate babies—was aghast, frequently, at the awful and impious criticisms of Henry which plumped themselves into her brain before she could stop them. She knew she would go straight to Hell for the things she had thought about her husband, but, since Henry would be so obviously an inhabitant of the alternative sphere, she felt her punishment might be supported with something approaching fortitude. And, without a doubt, Henry Hubbard was precisely the type of man who would send any wife to Hell, only Lucy, being an excellent little soul, went the dullest way and with no enjoyment to herself at all. Which was a pity, or not, as one regards these things. . . .

Meanwhile, across the passage, a door had opened with a wrench, four stamping footfalls had traversed the landing, and a second door shut with a resounding bang. Lucy shivered, conjuring up a vision of Henry's pompous form bent over the bath waiting for the steam which-wasn't-going-to-rise from the running water. Henry, in a padded silk dressing-gown of royal purple, his horrid black hair sticking up in spikes,

Illustration by Illingworth

...etched out a timid but friendly hand

BELOVED

By Anne Abercromby

the Napoleonic profile suspended with vindictive intensity over the hot-water tap whose winking brightness would be an added insult to the outrage of London's leading architect unable to procure the wherewithal to cleanse his important person.

Lucy arose and dressed; it was her habit to be down before Henry so that measures might be taken against unexpected pitfalls—such as windows being open too much or too little, the fire sulky or "fit to roast an ox," something missing from the breakfast-table—some small thing which might add to the caustic bite of Henry's matutinal tongue were it not rectified in time. These tragedies averted, it was Lucy's pleasure to skim the paper, paying more particular attention to the obituary notices and accident reports than to the prosy prattle of Westminster or Geneva. It struck her daily as so curious how everyone died with readiness except Henry. It would seem numberless "dearly beloved" husbands sacrificed themselves, between the rising and the setting of each sun without a qualm—dying prompt and natural deaths. While others, of a possibly more heroic cast, rendered themselves victims of road accidents, were polished off in railway disasters, went down in ships, slipped on orange-peel, swallowed poisonous substances, lost themselves, gashed themselves, got rid of themselves in a hundred-and-one simple ways . . . all but Henry, and nothing ever happened to him. If he felt ill, he was better before the doctor had written out the prescription; traffic was paralysed at the sight of him—no train he travelled in ever had an accident; and when he tumbled on his nose, he got up with a smile.

DREADFUL, too dreadful, that she should be capable of envying the widow's solitary plight—incapable of appreciating the sterling qualities of the irreproachable Henry. A good man. A man destitute of vice. A man who drank with moderation, never gambled, smoked only after meals, and who was looked upon by all as a model of integrity. A successful architect, a staunch Unionist, an intrepid churchgoer, a communicant, and goodness knows what else, but probably a Freemason. Not one black mark against his name, and yet . . .

"The water," spake out the virtuous Henry, entering the room letters in hand, "was cold, *as usual*, the water for my tea not properly boiled, the butter salt, the bread new, and far more than the requisite amount of tea in the pot, the spout of which, I observed, had been chipped through sheer carelessness," and he eyed his wife with cold rancour out of eyes of a light stone colour—not unlike a sheep's. Lucy said nothing.

"Sulking again! Am I not to be allowed free speech in my own house?"

"I wasn't sulking, Henry."

"Really? I'm afraid you must allow me to judge for myself—if I may be permitted the privilege."

He opened his letters with impatience until he came upon one which evidently pleased him, for a gleam of gratification lit, for an instant, his face, and he cleared his throat on a note of genial expectancy.

"Might I ask," he began, his air of politeness such that he might have been requesting the pleasure of a dance, "if you have any idea what the consumption of coal amounts to in this establishment?"

"No . . ."

"More than treble that of any other household, which, assuming the range is used exclusively for warming the servants' toes and keeping the water cool, is excessive. Have you ever taken any means of ascertaining how much is used per day?"

"No . . ."

"You've not the least idea whether it is twenty scuttlesful or a thimbleful? Is there anything in connection with the management of this house you do know? Or am I and the house completely beneath your contempt?"

"No . . ."

"Here is an account," and he flicked the sheet of paper he held, "for fifteen pounds, and the winter not yet begun, nothing but dross for the drawing-room and the water cold—and yet I'm expected to pay up with a smile . . ."

"No," said Lucy, quietly, and sat down to pour out the coffee.

It was astonishingly hard work to keep the amber eyes quite clear, because Lucy was one of those deplorable simpletons who have neglected to harden their hearts under the delusion that the world is made of rubber and not of granite . . . but, after all, why should the trivial cruelty of a bombastic ass be allowed to dim the crisp loveliness of a November morning all wrapped in golden dreams of the year's vanishing glory? If he had beaten her, starved her, been in a condition of perpetual inebriety, there might have been some excuse for her unhappiness—but here was a good man trying to inculcate thrift into a stupid wife.

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GIGOLO—*Continued from page 34*

She is terribly sad; she could cry, very easily; she would love tosob on his narrow young shoulders, so beautifully groomed; but not here, not at Victor's . . . . .

her bank balance is going to be empty, too, before he has finished with her. . . .

"There's something about you," she says vaguely. Champagne swirls in golden mists in her head; her words have a tendency to slide. The tiny dancing floor is crowded, and the dancers seem to be moving in a haze. She is terribly sad; she could cry, very easily; she would love to sob on his narrow young shoulders, so beautifully groomed; but not here, not at Victor's. . . . In spite of her sadness, she would not miss a moment of this; it is the most exquisite pleasure to be so sad in this atmosphere of shaded lights and throbbing music, with the bubbles mounting in the champagne cocktails. . . . "I can't explain," she maunders on. He knows very well that she can't explain; also, for him, she doesn't need to.

"I feel it about you, too," he says, and presses her hand a moment, then detaches his own. "Let's dance again, shall we? I adore dancing with you. . . ."

And so it goes on. Occasionally, Mrs. Furtive-Fifty retires to the ladies' cloakroom to make up her face all over again and apply another touch of perfume behind her ears. She peers thoughtfully into the mirror, staring into her glazed eyes, fighting down the feeling of drunkenness, reassuring herself that she doesn't look much more than thirty-five.

When she returns to the table he rises gallantly, re-arranging her wrap behind her when she sits down, smiling, assuring her with his eyes that she looks lovely. To prevent her making love to him, he talks at random about himself—about something he refers to as his soul. He begins to enjoy himself at this; he has a stock of pseudo-philosophy released by the pressing of a mental button. Women usually like this; it lifts the conversation to what seems to be an intellectual plane, and serves the double purpose of making them feel that they are intelligent, and of presenting himself to them in an intellectual light—not just a dancing-boy, but a serious person. He knows enough about music and poetry to be able to create the desired impression—particularly as Mrs. Furtive-Fifty knows very little herself. Occasionally he introduces a French phrase or quotation which affords an excuse for that shrug of the shoulders and flutter of the hands which is part of his stock-in-trade of charm. It is ten chances to one against her understanding—but that is all to the good; she is impressed, and he enjoys the showing-off.

But Mrs. Furtive-Fifty wilts a little under the serious turn of the conversation, missing the stimulus of hand-pressings and knee-pattings; without this stimulus she can no longer fight down sleep. Yawn after yawn overtakes her, until at last he turns to her with an air of contrition, "Oh, my dear, you're so tired, and here am I running on! You should have stopped me! Let me take you home. . . ."

She is ready to go. She is almost dropping with fatigue. He holds her hand in the taxi; now that he is getting rid of her it is easier to be kind. She tries to pin him down to a cocktail appointment to-morrow at lunch-time; but he does not know what quarry he will be hunting by then; he tells her that he will telephone her.

"We're both too tired to discuss times and places now," he says gently.

"Dear boy," she murmurs drowsily. Somewhere at the back of her mind she knows that she must pay him. She fumbles in her ornate evening-bag. "I must give you something towards the expenses of our evening," she says. "It's been lovely, but I can't let you pay for everything."

"It's sweet of you," he says simply.

She slips notes into his hand, far more than the expenses of the evening, giving his fingers a little squeeze as she does so. She is one of his best clients. She never makes it necessary for him to ask her point-blank. To-morrow morning he will send to her at her hotel a few roses bought with her money, and, if he has nothing more profitable to do, he will allow her to buy him luncheon—and perhaps another dinner.

He kisses her hand and sees her safely into the hotel, then walks back to Victor's. It is only two o'clock, and much may happen before dawn. He buys himself a whisky-and-soda out of his recent earnings, and, sitting perched up on a stool at the bar, takes stock of the room.

Tactlessly the band is strumming—

"Just a gigolo—dressed up all for show—"

He doesn't care; the band, like himself, is on the job. There is not much left to choose from in the room. . . . He swallows his whisky and, slipping down from his stool, crosses the floor to ask yet another tired, sagging old woman if he may have the pleasure of dancing with her. . . .

She smiles gratefully up into his eyes, and he reads there, "You dear boy. . . ."

At three o'clock he is sitting on the couch beside her, and she is holding his hand and murmuring with alcoholic vagueness, "There's something about you. . . ."

He presses her fingers sympathetically. "I feel it about you, too. Let's dance again, shall we? I adore dancing with you. . . ."

E.M.

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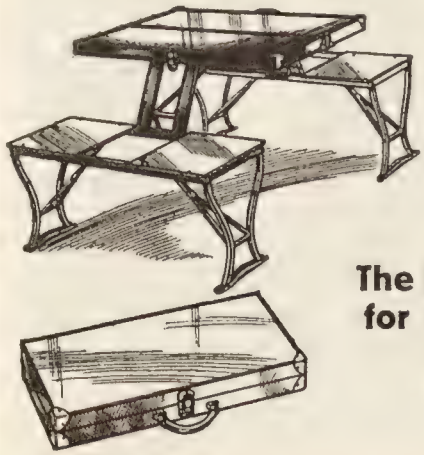

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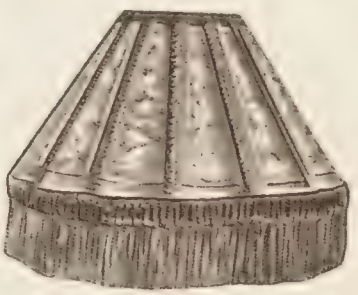

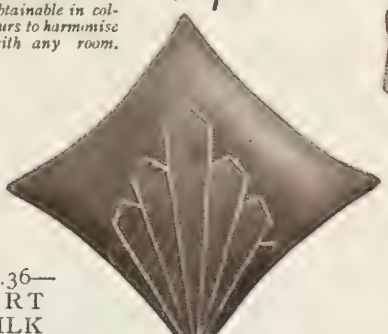

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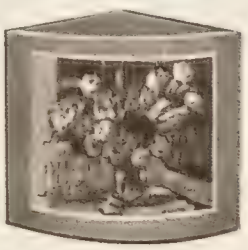

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old man, I think you ought
to put in another grape."

G. P.
Estab. 1851

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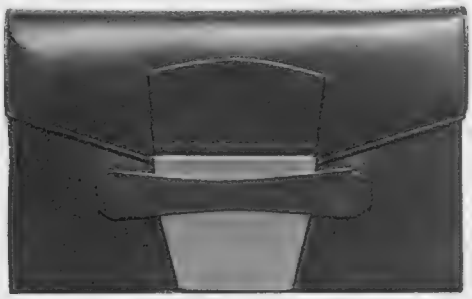

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HONEYMOON (Continued from page 43)

sweeties, or Englishwomen and their boy friends. I don't want to lower your tone, darling!"

Her acute distress, like too many drinks, had loosened her tongue.

"Then have a benedictine?"

"Yes; I'll have a benedictine and a biscuit."

"*Got to go through with it!*" The wheels were making a little song out of Janis's remark—

Got-to-go-through-with-it;
Can't-be-a-kill-joy.
Can't-be-a-kill-joy,
Got-to-go-through-with-it.

She tried to smile across at Hugo, and raised her glass to him.

Still the foreigner watched—wise, sympathetic, shrewd. If she had been alone she would have spoken to him. Would she? Wouldn't she? If she were alone, she wouldn't be on a honeymoon. She would never have started at all.

When they got back to their wagon-lit the beds had been made up.

"Sorry, Hugo—I really can't stand this——"

"All right," he said, with astonishing kindness—for mere Hugo. "You're worn out, poor old girl, and no wonder. I hope you get some sleep."

"You don't happen to have any sort of dope for nerves in your luggage, do you? Any damn thing—they packed for me, and didn't even put in aspirin."

Finally he did find some in a pocket of her dressing-case. "Powder it up: you'll find it works quicker that way," he said.

The property of the Wagon-Lit Company-and-Great-European Expresses rocked and swayed and groaned.

"Isn't there a stop at Nuremburg?"

He said, yes, there was. A longish stop. . . .

Across the remainder of Belgium in the dark. Dark inside and out. Across Germany. Would she have the courage to get off the train at Nuremburg? On a Sunday morning. . . .

Hugo had all their money, except some loose British silver in her own bag and her letter of credit on Vienna.

To-morrow being Sunday made all the difference.

The stranger's face was before her in the darkness: grave, interrogatory.

She ought never to have come. She should have been strong enough to stop in time. On Dover Pier she had known, and she could have stopped Hugo then, with the excuse of a night at the Lord Warden, and gone off on her own, found someone to consult. You knew whom you were dealing with in England. Not abroad!

England for the English! She knew French backwards and forwards, but not a word of German. Not even the German for . . . all the things she needed to know the German for!

She would have trusted that man, foreigner or not. Was he still on the train?

There were stops in the night. He might have got off at Cologne.

SOME honeymoon! But she was desperate. The darkness and this nagging distress had worn her nerves right through. She was savage, and she had the conviction that if only she could shake Hugo off and speak to that man, he would help her. To accost a stranger in an international train on a mere supposition wouldn't square with Hugo's self-supporting British notions in any circumstances. Least of all in these . . .

And all the time she could see how wretched this was for Hugo.

Under the blinds, the windows of the carriage were turning grey. The loop of plush rope that acted as a banister to the upper berth, where Hugo slept evenly, swayed like a noose at the end of which a corpse might creditably dangle.

They would not see Vienna until about nine o'clock that night.

"You awake up there?"

"Um-urrum. Feel any better?"

"Glad you got some sleep. More than I did!"

"Oh, I *say* . . ."

Violently she thought: "He isn't thinking of me! He isn't really sorry for me, trapped like this. . . . He's only annoyed because of what he's been let in for; because everything isn't going according to plan."

The romantic, slushy, emotional plan!

Behind her in the corridor he said in French: "A very pretty countryside, Madame!"

Men only became cognizant of women's sensations when those sensations went, so to speak, into reverse . . .

She asked: "Is breakfast over before Nuremburg?"

For she had remembered that if that man was still on the train she would see him at breakfast. Otherwise she would know he had gone, and, anyhow, she was thoroughly unhinged.

Hugo didn't know. What did it matter, anyhow, when their seats and tickets were booked through?

"We shan't have the same seats. They make up the train at Nuremburg—the new train."

(Perhaps, in the interval, perhaps, perhaps. . . .)

"I'm thinking of stopping at Nuremburg," she said, "and coming on later. You can do as you like."

"My *dear* Nibs!" said Hugo, annihilating the folly of this suggestion. "It's Sunday, and suppose we got stuck there—what is there to see?"

(*I don't want you. You go to hell!*)

"For *you* to see! Dear old houses and Albrecht Dürer, and lilacs in the moat, and the great broad street they made for the ex-Kaiser."

"Oh, hell!" said Hugo telepathically, and went next door to shave.

Presently he came back.

"You know," she said, sitting on the edge of her berth and pulling round her garter, which he had disarranged to admire the way the ribbons were woven in and out and in again, "this marriage could still be annulled."

Hugo said not if he knew it.

There was the usual wagon-lit breakfast.

She cut the centre out of a roll as if she had been peeling an orange, and ate it thoughtfully.

The stranger had come in.

The stranger with the penetrating eyes, the sensitive, capable hands.

He was sitting where he sat yesterday, and she knew he was regarding her with great attention; wondering about her; verifying his conjecture of last night.

There was nothing insulting in his scrutiny. It said: "*I can help you.*"

(*Continued on page i.*)

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The Honeymoon *(Continued from page 72)*

She knew he was longing to speak to her. If she had been alone he would have spoken to her—perhaps! She had forgotten how punctilious foreigners were. Even in the matter of casual recognition, it was the man's place to salute a lady first; a sign of homage très respectueux, as the French ma'mselle told the classes at her old school. Oh, hell!

Hugo, of course, would be shocked at such a thing. But Hugo was nowhere in this. It was her affair, and she was past caring.

Crashing through Germany. Toy trees and toy houses. She would have to make up her mind before Nuremburg.

Anything was better than this. She couldn't go on.

The first of the waiters came round with the rechnung. (German money now!) She rose, leaving Hugo to settle.

"I 'm going back to our carriage," she said.

The stranger rose too. He had carelessly thrown down the exact amount, with a tip, in the right currency, as if he were accustomed to thinking in several currencies and languages.

Behind her, in the corridor, he said in French:

"A very pretty countryside, Madame."

"A very pretty countryside. Monsieur leaves the train at Nuremburg, perhaps."

"No, Madame. Not until Budapest, where I go to an international congress."

Her ideas kaleidoscoped and tried to readjust themselves. A diplomat! No, she had never imagined him a diplomat.

"And I," she said, "leave the train at Wien, with my husband. You go farther than I, Monsieur."

The broken fragments of her ideas had fallen into a drab pattern after that convulsion. A pattern ineffectual, after all her hopes! How she had hoped!—and she had been wrong. Of course. Too often, desire breeds hope, and hope a false conviction.

She had meant to ask him something about Nuremburg. If her first conjecture had been right, he might have given her an introduction to someone whom he knew.

Why should he be interested in her distress, or in her?

Hugo was coming. She moved on. Their wagon-lit had been turned into a carriage again, with a little table.

"Another ten hours," said Hugo bracingly.

He lit two cigarettes. He inhaled the smoke of the first until the tip glowed red; then, taking it from his lips, placed it between hers.

She tried to tell him something of what she was feeling.

Hugo looked harassed, as he had looked last night.

"I 'm damnably sorry, old thing," he said. "You know I am. But we 've *got* to go on now. . . . I say"—briskly changing the subject—"I thought we might do Buda before we go back. All those cziganes and fellas; beginning of the East sort of touch. They build their church towers to look like narghiles."

"That dark man who sat near us in the dining-car says he 's going there too. Seems to be a diplomat."

"Doesn't look like a diplomat to me," said Hugo.

"Nor to me either. Aren't these foregners misleading?"

She would have to decide before Nuremburg. Terrible, this necessity to decide.

"I 've got an Edgar Wallace somewhere," she said. Hugo liked Edgar Wallace. She found the book and a P. G. Wodehouse too. She felt she owed that much to Hugo. He asked for nuptial caresses, and received Wallace-and-Wodehouse.

Nuremburg would not help. Sunday, Sunday. . . .

She took her cigarette out into the corridor. There *he* was, with his arms leaning upon the rail which ran across the glass side of the coach.

Their eyes met full.

She thought: "Which of us will speak first? One of us must!"

Unconsciously her hand went up to her face.

To make conversation. Nuremburg. Lilacs in the moat. Such a misfortune—she had come away on her honeymoon. . . . Why mention honeymoon at all, if he had not guessed?

Perhaps he knew Wien—or someone in Wien. Perhaps they could make an appointment. . . .

An appointment, on the second day of her honeymoon with Hugo! She almost laughed, but laughter hurt.

That long gaze held. She was not the prey of imagination. This man *knew*.

He saved her from all decisions by speaking first.

"Madame will permit me. Madame is in great distress from toothache, is it not? Ah, yes, I have remarked!—and I have such a pity for Madame. But, happily, perhaps I can help. Actually this is my vacation; but Madame will understand when I tell her that I go as delegate from my country to the International Dental Congress at Budapest. By chance I have with me a small instrument case and a hypodermic. So if Monsieur and Madame will permit: a so-great pleasure—"

She had been right about his profession, that first time!

She burst into their converted sleeper again.

"Hugo, *precious*!" She knocked the Edgar Wallace out of his hand. "It 's all right, darling, we 're saved. I 've *found* a dentist—*there 's one on the train!*" T. L.

The Hundredth Sheep *(Continued from page 7)*

inmate of a disorderly house. He can't help it. Nature made him that way."

"I did want you," George Mendip said, and in those four words he concentrated an eternity of longing apology, despair and suffering. "But you 've got no damn' sense over a man, Constance. You can't distinguish between what matters and what 's just natural foolishness. We only hang murderers; God knows why you should want to crucify someone who, at the worst, was merely a fool."

Constance Mendip's dark eyes seemed to grow larger and larger in her white face. A shiver ran through her and she looked at the point of collapse. George Mendip said brusquely: "Hang on till I get you some brandy," and went quickly out of the room. When he had gone, Meriel spoke for the first time.

"Believe me, Constance, I mean nothing whatever to George and he means less to me. I just saw him drinking steadily at the Consulate and so, because I like him, I wished myself on him to save him from someone worse. If you haven't the sense to realise he loves you, and be grateful, you must do the other thing, but, personally, I think you 're a damned fool. May I use the telephone in your bedroom? I want to ring up a man who 'll take me home."

On the way she passed George Mendip bearing brandy. He hardly seemed to see her. She dialled Peter's number anxiously, and presently she heard his voice.

"Oh, Peter, this is Meriel. Peter, I was a perfect swine this morning. I rang up to say I 'm sorry. Please will you forgive me?"

"Why, of course I will, darling. I knew you didn't mean to be unkind. It 's sweet of you to ring up."

In his voice she discovered all the longing, despair and suffering that George had crowded into the words "I did want you." She said very gently, "Peter, will you do something for me? Will you collect me at the Mendip's flat and take me home? I 'll explain everything to you later on. Thank you, Peter. You 're an absolute angel."

She lit a cigarette and sat smoking in Constance's bedroom until she heard the hall door-bell ring. Then she returned to the sitting-room while George opened the hall door. There were traces of weeping about Constance's eyes and George had the appearance of one victorious over death, for whom all the trumpets sound on the other side.

In the finished manner of people of the world they tided, in a body, over what could not help having the appearance of a strained situation. Peter, perceiving that Constance Mendip was wearing a coat and skirt at something after midnight and seemed ready to drop, said she looked marvellous. George Mendip offered Peter a drink and he declined politely. Meriel asked Peter to tell George the name of the outsider that was bound to win the Amalgamated Stakes at Sandown Park, and he told it. She and Peter retired gracefully after five minutes of this, honour having been satisfied.

In the taxi she explained to Peter exactly what had happened, together with many other things. It took so long that they drove as far as Putney Common and back before all had been made clear. As they neared her home in Pont Street, she ended, lying in his arms:

"And so, you see, I 'd rather marry you than live with you after all, Peter. There seems to be something impregnable and beautiful about marriage. If one chooses the right man it 's proof against almost anything, even a little ass like Constance Mendip, or me, if it comes to that." F. E. B.

FLIBBERTIGIBBET—*Continued from page 18*

have things, both ways. You want to be irresponsible like me and, at the same time, stable like your husband. You want to lead wild lives in studio flats in London, yet have solid country houses at the back of you. And it can't be done, my dear. That 's why all you people come such croppers. You 've got to take the one or the other."

Had anyone else spoken to her in that way she would have felt that she was being read a sermon, but Maurice's eyes were kind and friendly. "If you aren't careful," he said, "you 'll find yourself spoilt for both worlds. You 'll be wandering about, lost; in a kind of middle-mist. I think," he added, "it would be much better if you were to come with me to Buenos Aires."

His eyes were mocking, but they were tender. He would be really pleased if I did come, she thought. In his way he loves me, though he 's never said so. Which was a nice way of being loved. She was grateful to him for understating his excitement. She remembered how solemnly John had looked at her when he proposed. How he had taken her hand in his. How slowly he had spoken. How he had assured her that, were she to marry him, her happiness and her welfare would be his one, his only, care. And that was fitting in John's case, of course. He was the kind of man who said things solemnly. But Maurice wasn't. Maurice wasn't a serious person, which perhaps, I 'm not either, she thought, wondering whether what had been embarked on so lightly as a pleasure cruise might not become a far longer journey.

"I 'll think about it," she said. "Maybe I 'll come with you."

THROUGH the long afternoon, as they sun-bathed on yellow cushions on the ramparts of Eden Roc, she wondered whether she would not regret it all her life if she were to let that ship sail without her.

"I 've been asleep for five years," she thought. "I 'm awake at last." Never had she been so happy before, or care-free. "I wasn't meant for the life John planned for me. I 'm the wrong person for him. I went to him in reaction; on the rebound. There are girls who are fitted for a life like that. I 'm not. It would be best for me to break clear now. While there 's still time for John to find someone else." Perhaps. She did not know. She was too lazy, too indolent for decisions. For so long she had been fretted by the necessity for doing things; for deciding things; for adopting attitudes. It was so much nicer to relax in the sunlight; with her laughing companion at her side; with the blue of a Mediterranean sky above her, and these easy, pleasure-loving people lounging on their orange cushions. She felt happy here. What was it Maurice had called her that afternoon? "Flibbertigibbet." Well, and perhaps that was what she was. In that case his was the world that she belonged to; she had no place in John's world, really. If that was so, then perhaps she was better out of it. Perhaps. She did not know. She wondered.

She was still wondering that evening as they strolled through the streets of Juan in search of a restaurant.

"There 's an amusing new place across the way," said Maurice. "Let 's try it."

It was bright and smart. A band was playing. It was the kind of place she liked; the kind of place that John would avoid if there were no other restaurant within a mile of it. Just as she was walking through the swing doors, however, Maurice caught her arm.

"No," he said. "We won't go in there."

"Oh, but I 'd like to."

"Well, I wouldn't. Let 's go."

His firmness astonished her. She was not accustomed to firmness in him. Nothing mattered enough to him for that.

"Why didn't you want to go in there?" she asked.

"Because they 've got a head waiter that I once had trouble with."

"What kind of trouble?"

"The usual kind of trouble."

"He gave you the wrong table?"

"Heavens, no! I 'd like to see the waiter who would try that trick on me."

"He added up the bill wrong?"

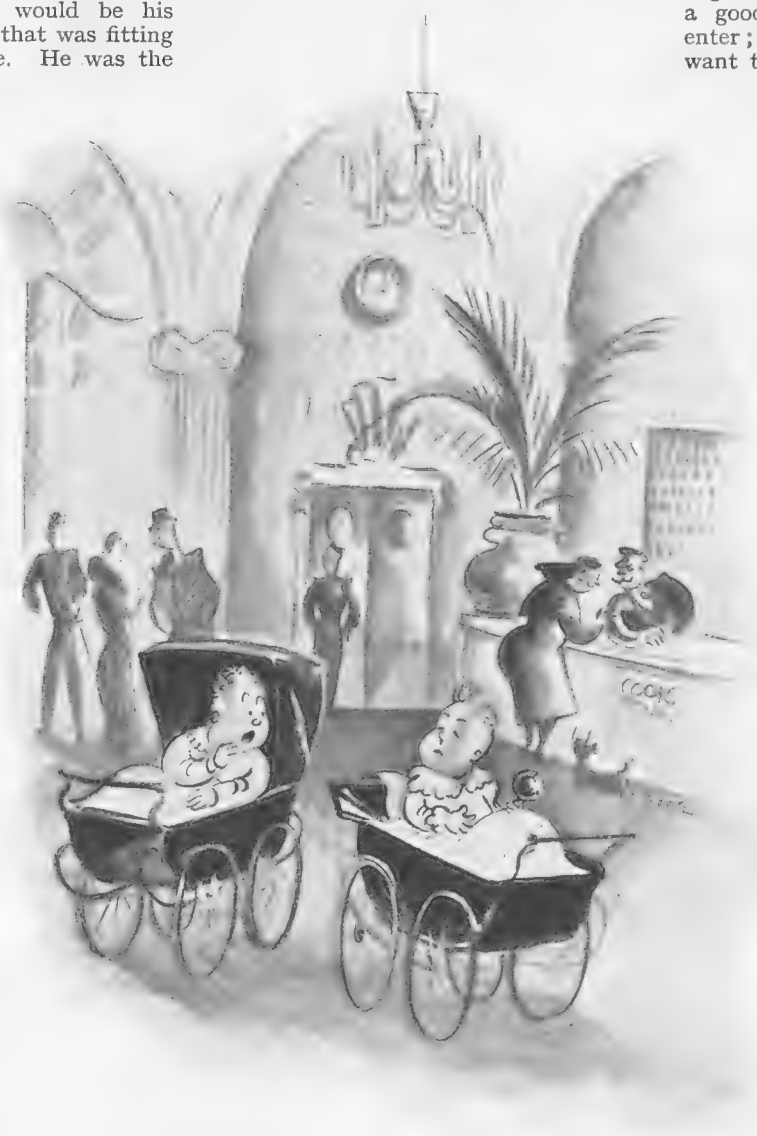
"If he had, I shouldn't have noticed it. It was the kind of place where you signed bills; you can't very well add up a bill that you 're going to sign."

"I see."

He had signed bills: and then forgotten them: purposely or not it scarcely mattered. There were, she supposed, a good many such incidents in his life; a good many restaurants he couldn't enter; a good many people he didn't want to face. Maurice was the kind of person who never considered money: it was a trait she liked in him. John was always talking about money. What they could afford, or what they couldn't afford. She got so tired of the word "money." She had liked being with Maurice, who just asked what would be fun to do. And whatever was the most fun, did; who never asked or considered what anything would cost. Of course, if you lived that way, if you ignored money, there would be this trail of returned cheques and unmet bills; and restaurants you couldn't go inside. It might be tiresome to have to bother about money as John did, but you could walk with your head high into any restaurant. There was a good deal to be said for being John, she thought.

All the same, it was a bright, gay restaurant that they went to: perhaps it didn't matter very much if one restaurant was closed to you when there were so many other equally gay restaurants to choose from. And there was Maurice, brown and gay, with the mocking light in his black eyes, so pagan and irresponsible. Just not caring what came his way. It would be fun to go

(*Continued on page iv*)



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FLIBBERTIGIBBET—*Continued from page* ii

through life with somebody like that. "I'll go with him," she thought. "It'll be best for all of us that way. I wonder what he'll say when I tell him. Something about ringing up the purser in the morning, I suppose. It'll be fun to see. I'll tell him now," she thought.

"Maurice," she began; but he was not listening. He was looking across the room towards a girl whose reflection she could see in a mirror behind Maurice's head. It was a girl in the middle twenties: a short, dark girl: with brown hair cut in a low fringe over hazel eyes. Her skin was very pale; her mouth was a bright, moist red that matched the finger-nails of the plump hand that lay against her cheek. The shoulders that lifted beneath the loose silk blouse were white and soft and rounded. Her face had brightened at the sight of Maurice, her eyebrows had lifted interrogatively. The girl who a minute earlier had planned to run away to Buenos Aires dropped her eyes from the mirror to her lover's face. She could read there the answer to that interrogatively-lifted eyebrow. There was a smile on Maurice's face. It was a friendly smile; a smile that said more clearly than words could have ever done: "It's nice to see you. I think of you. I've been missing you. At this moment, as you may guess, I'm not able to see you in the way I want to see you. But soon, here or somewhere else, we'll be meeting as we used to do."

Crowded Out

This delightful snapshot of Lord Caraway on his Lewes winner, taken at Newbury Harvest Festival, was unfortunately crowded out of our Social Gossip on pages 30 and 31. Sorry!

And that's that, she thought.

It was not that she was jealous. Maurice must have had love affairs in plenty. He was ardent, attractive, generous: the kind of man that women fell for. A man who travelled as much as Maurice did could be never very definitely entangled. It was not jealousy that made her say "That's that," but the recognition of what Maurice's life as regards women really was. He was as careless in love as he was with money; the world's surface was littered for him with restaurants he could not return to and people he could not meet; with loose threads; with half-begun, half-finished love affairs.

It was a life that would leave her, in the end, like that girl across the restaurant, not abandoned, not discarded, but lost sight of somehow; to be picked up again should things so fit in. Maurice would not be cruel, he would not be mean: he would just be casual. He treated people as he expected they would treat him. Just as John carried an Edwardian formality to an extreme, so did Maurice carry a Georgian inconsequentialness to its logical conclusion.

"Darling," she said, "I'm not going with you to Buenos Aires."

He took the information in the same spirit that she had fancied he would have taken the other announcement that a few moments earlier had trembled upon her tongue. His smile was of

(*Continued on page* vi)

By Appointment

Time to think of Dress Clothes

Christmas and New Year festivities are drawing near. New Dress clothes should be ordered now if a reasonable margin of time is to be allowed for fittings—an essential consideration for such attire. Bernard Weatherill has the distinction of making dress clothes for men of most exacting taste, satisfying them in cut, style, materials—and the important question of price.

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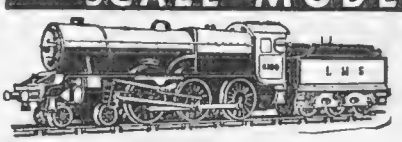

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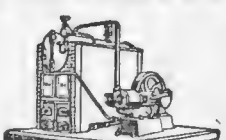

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(in BLOCK letters)
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FLIBBERTIGIBBET—*Continued from page iv*

the same tender, indifferent, affectionate mockery.

"Aren't you? Well, you know best Let 's have fun while we are here, at any rate."

And they did have fun. And her heart ached more than a little as the scorched earth sank away beneath the aeroplane, and the long line of the coast grew faint and distant. Her heart ached, but her mind was settled.

"I 'm a fool," she thought, "a ridiculous kind of fool. I 've imperilled what I really value for something I momentarily fancied. It 's John's world, not Maurice's, I want. You can't have a thing both ways. You can't live casually *and* safely. If John were to find out he 'd never forgive me, never. But he won't find out: no one will find out. Why should they?"

She had planned out her alibi carefully. She had a sister living in North Devon. That sister was alone and ill. She would say that she had been to stay with her. Since her sister was ill, there had been no other guest. She had spent a quiet three days reading, looking after her sister; going for walks; riding. John would not question her closely. He never did. He trusted her. She had failed that trust. But she never would again. Not ever. Maurice had said she wanted to live in both worlds and that nobody could do that; that if she wasn't careful she would find she had spoilt herself for both; that she 'd become just another aimlessly bright young person trying to get things three ways at once.

But he was wrong; she wasn't like that: of course she wasn't. She didn't want to be in two worlds. She wanted to be in John's world. She was going back to it, and she was glad. Never had her home seemed so welcoming as it did that night. It was so sound, so secure. No debts, no casual love affairs. Never had she welcomed John so warmly. John, who symbolised for her all the security and comfort of his world.

"Darling, I 've been so missing you," she said. "I 've had such a dull time without you. I went to Chagford to see Connie. It might have been fun with you, but without you, oh, my dear. . . ." She told him how she had spent her time; the novels she had read; her walks; her rides.

"But it was worth it. Now I 've got you back."

She was sitting on the side of his chair; one arm lay behind his neck. Her hand rested on his cheek. He took it between his hands. He kissed it softly, tenderly, holding it close against his mouth so that the engagement-ring, the large pale pearl in the platinum setting, was pressed between his lips.

"Darlingest, I 'm so glad to be back with you."

She talked so rapidly, her head rested against his, that she did not notice the changed expression of his face as his tongue touched the platinum setting of her ring. For she did not know that the salt particles of sea-water will cling to the engraving upon platinum; that the ring tasted salt against her husband's lips; that that saltness was reminding him of how, on their honeymoon, she had insisted on bathing with that ring upon her finger; and how that night the ring had tasted salt upon his tongue. She did not realise that her husband was computing how impossible it must have been for salt water to have touched that ring if she had spent the five days of his cricket tour, as she had said, at Chagford. She had not realised that the man who could not forgive a lie had discovered that his wife had lied to him. A. W.

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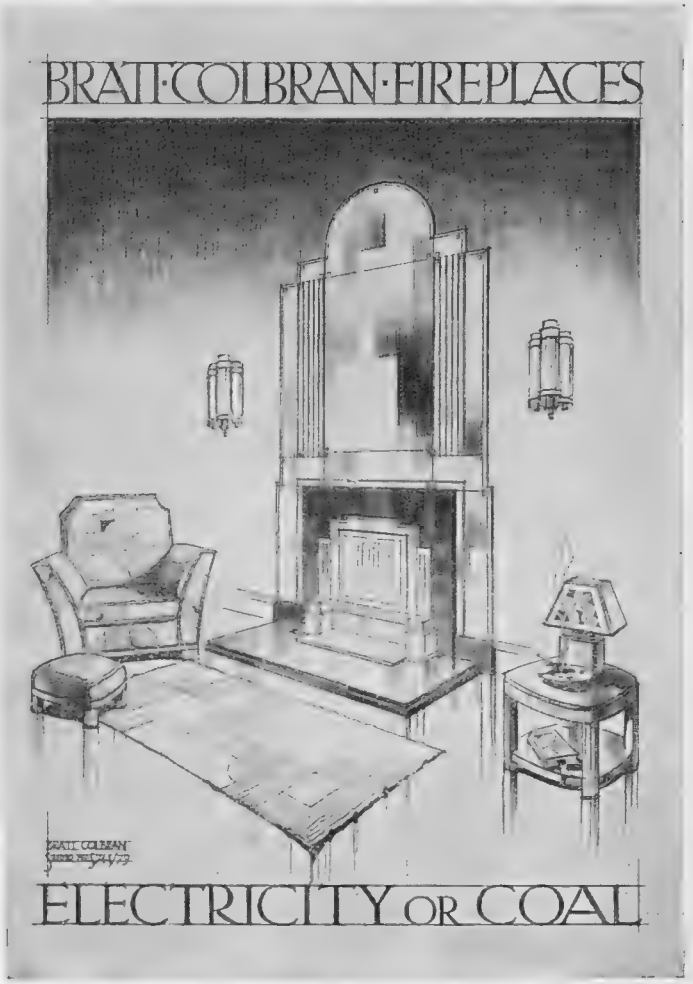

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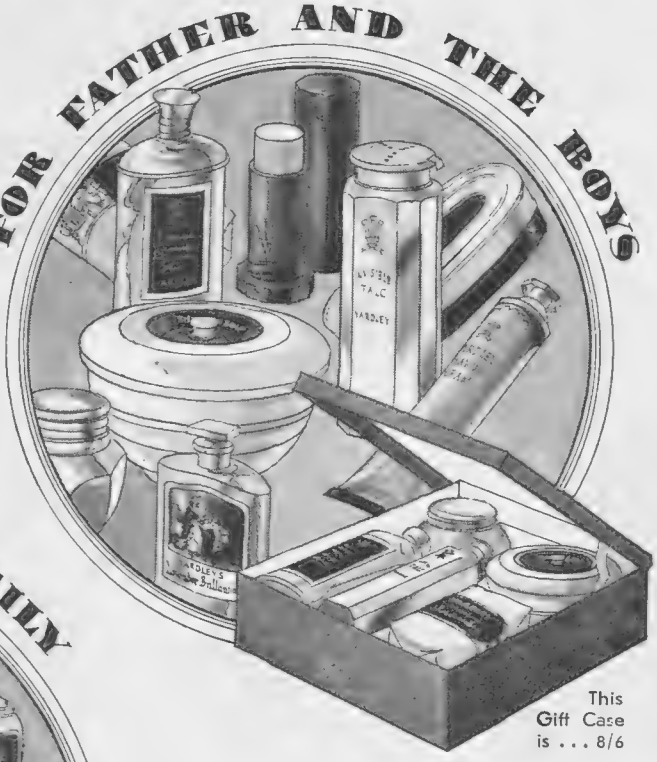

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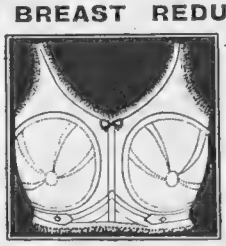

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On behalf of the men who make "Christmas" possible we ask for your generous help.

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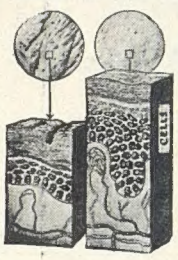
YOUTHFUL BEAUTY by REJUVENATION OF THE SKIN FROM WITHIN

Really beautiful skin is the creation of Nature and no external application can charm it on to the face. As you grow older the skin becomes loose, wrinkles and crowsfeet develop, and your youthful appearance gradually fades. This ageing process takes place in the deeper layers of the skin and cosmetics applied on the surface merely conceal the evidence of age. Creams, lotions and powders do not reach these deeper layers and are helpless to induce natural renovation and growth of the skin tissues which are undergoing the process of ageing. If the skin is to retain and regain its youthful beauty the tissues must be revitalised from within.

Section on left shows ageing skin: surface wrinkled and dry scales peeling off; poor layer of active tissue, cells shrunk to three rows.

Section on right shows skin after treatment with W-5 brand tablets: surface smooth and firm; rich active tissue; increased rows of cells some of which are growing; improved nutrition and therefore skin fresh, clear and youthful.



A discovery which will do more for you than all the cosmetics and face-lifting in the world.

A skin specialist of great repute in the scientific world—Dr. J. F. Kapp—made a discovery which created a sensation in medical circles. After sixteen years of research Dr. Kapp evolved a preparation, now known under the name of W-5 brand tablets, which is the first and so far the only one to regenerate the skin—rebuild it from within. Its secret is that it enlists the aid of Nature herself in this process of regeneration.

A most interesting and absorbing book, beautifully illustrated, explains this important discovery in the most comprehensive manner. *This book should be in the hands of every woman.* It will be sent gratis and post free.

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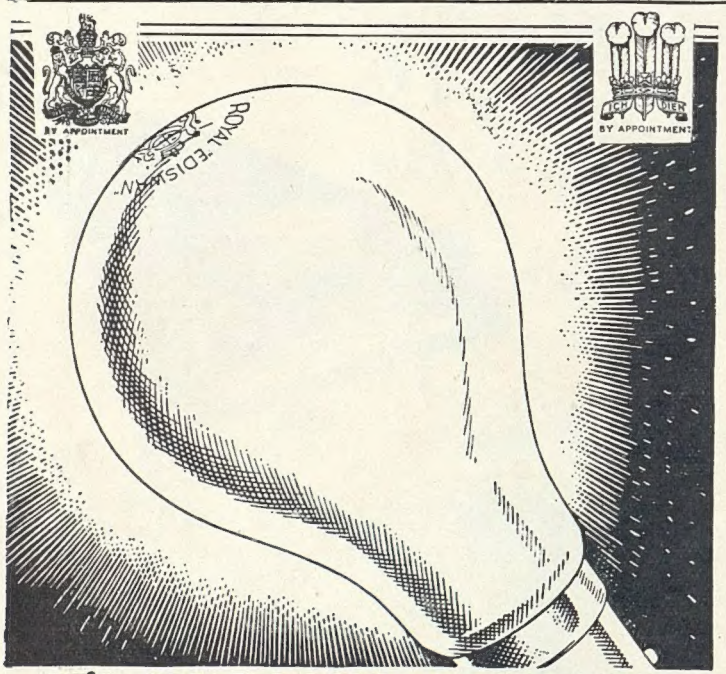

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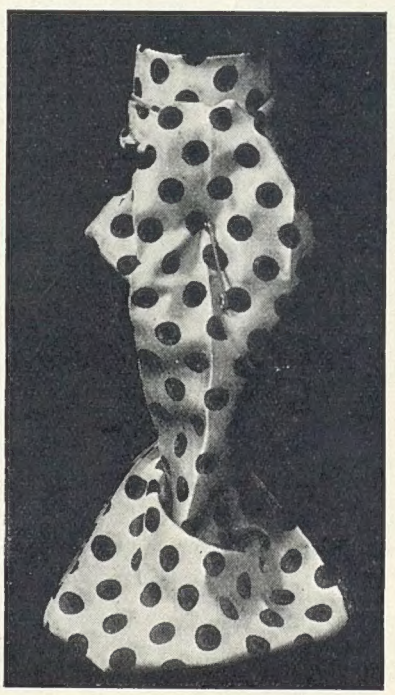

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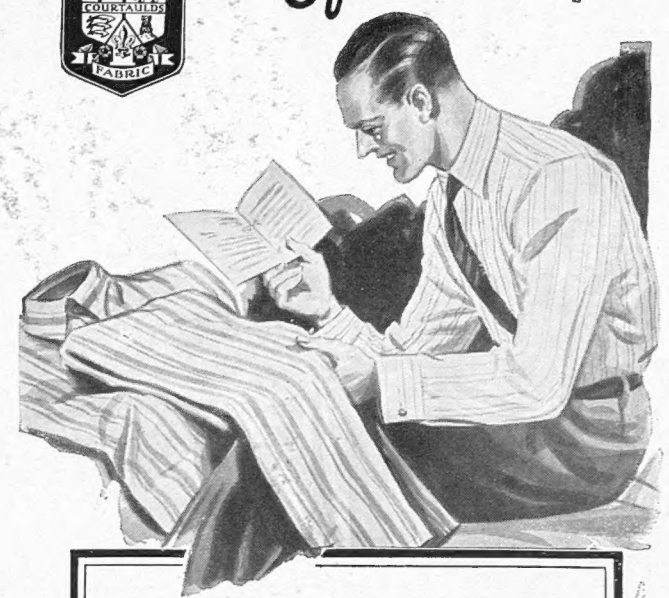

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